BEAM COMIX

九井諒子作品集

Seven Little Sons of the Dragon
Ryoko Kui

竜のかわいい七つの子

•九井諒子

the collection of 7 short stories

•九井諒子

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Mouth -> Behind -> Legs -> Ears -> Hands
(From "Wolves Tell No Lies")

The God of Natural Selection
(From "My Very Own God")

The four-frame strip cartoon as a bonus.

(Extra)

Go Ahead, Eat my Face
(From "Byakuroku The Penniless")

Sharee
...
It's not coming out...
Fine then, I'll give it some peppers
Herph.
It won't work if you don't draw eyes on it, right?
Pfhp
Go pick some mushrooms or herbs.
Aren't you going to eat it?

The Case of the Serial Murders at the Cultural Festival
(From "The Members of the Brutal Household")

Huh?
Arisa, who have you been having so much fun texting these last few days?
He said the pajamas are super comfy and encouraged me to say Shoma...
What?
Really?
Actually... I'm the detective from the other day.
GRRRRR
I PROMISED TO TAKE HIM TO THE NEXT CULTURAL FESTIVAL.
WOOOW! THAT'S GREAT!
He didn't get into the school of his choice and said he was going to wait it out for another year.
Did Mao-kun finish with his exams?
Noooo.

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Seven Little Sons Of the Dragon

The First Story

The Dragon's Small Steeple

Soldiers!
It has long been the dearest wish of our great Sea Kingdom
to take that beautiful mountain range back from the savages of the Mountain Kingdom.
Soldiers,
it has long been the dearest wish of our great Mountain Kingdom to take that beautiful coastline back from...
There's something flying across the sky.
Probably a bird.
Harden yourselves! Now is the time to bring down the hammer of justice upon our enemies!
However, now is the
What are you spacing out for?
...kingdom supporting us, we cannot be defeated!
war.
Ah.
What now?
What?
It's a dragon.

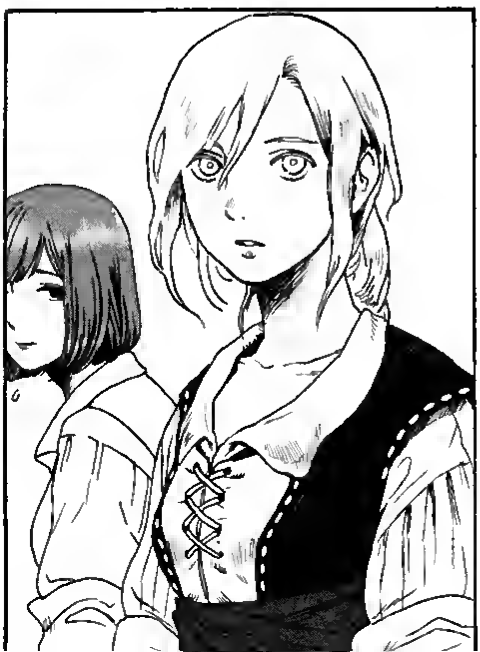
Seven Little Sons Of the Dragon
The First Story
The Dragon's Small Steeple

You over there, take it out of the fire and give it a taste!
After you turn off the fire, soak it in cold water right away.
and then spread an even amount on the bread.

The efforts you make here are also tied to the defeat of the Sea Kingdom.

Shh!
If this is what hard work tastes like, they won't be able to win any of their fights.

As we're unable to fight, we're responsible for taking care of the daily necessities of the soldiers instead.
Don't get lazy now.



please deliver this meal to the commandant.

Yuruka,
!

For what purpose did you cross the border?
You lie! Crops such as those rock potatoes grow anywhere!
I'm not lying.

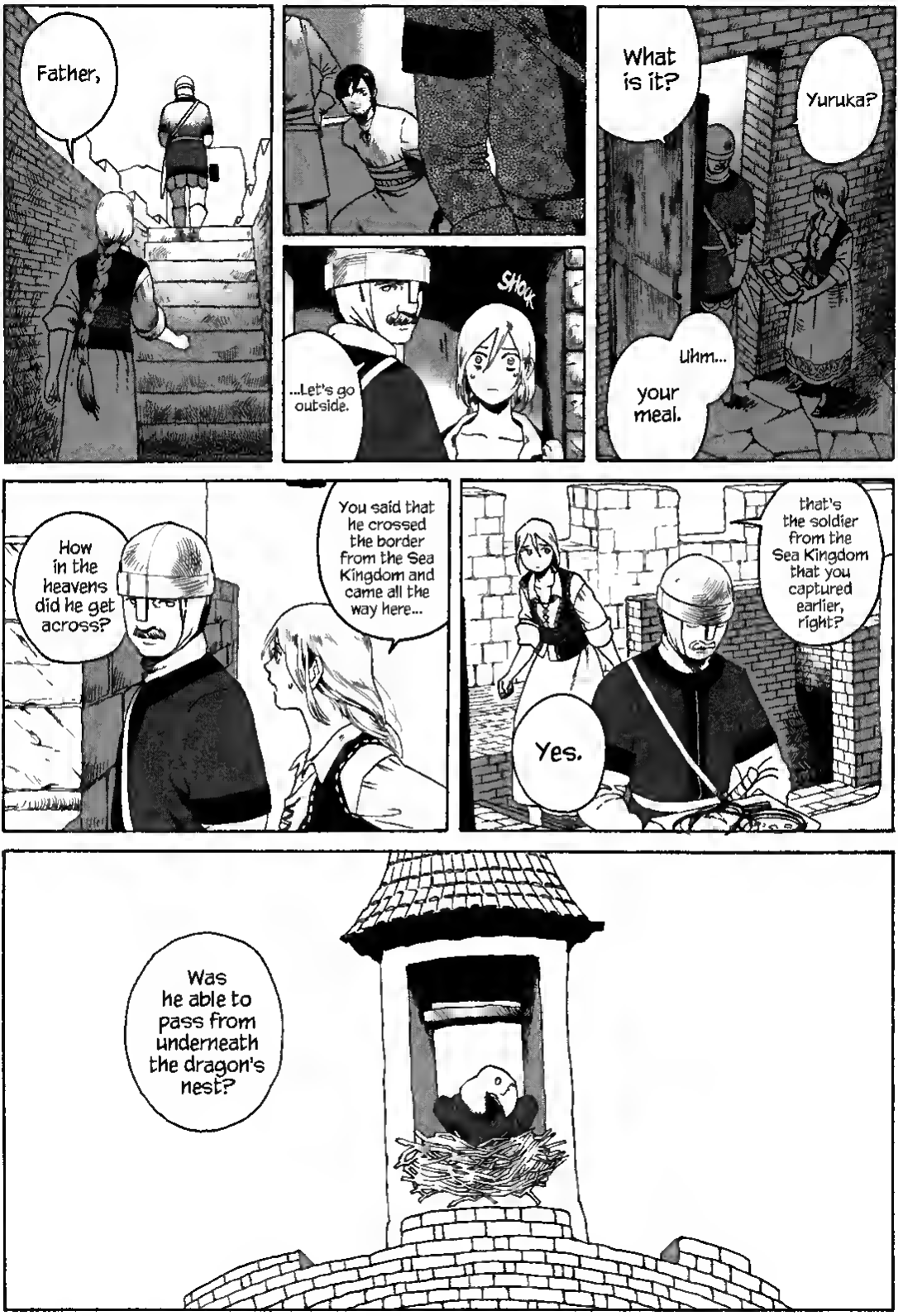
I beg of you!
We need them desperately...

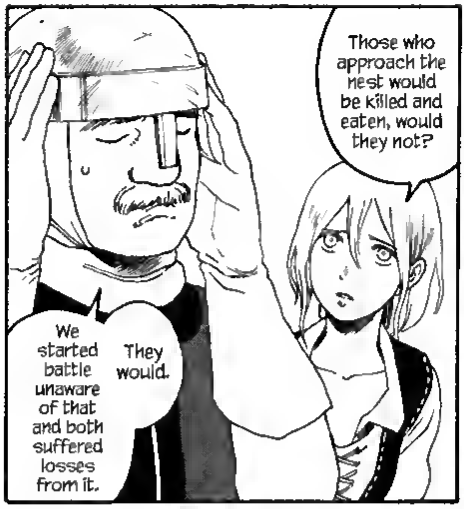
Normally they are transported to us by the merchants that travel through these roads,
but that has completely come to an end because of the dragon...
We are not able to grow those potatoes well in our kingdom.
The salt breeze damages the leaves.

Your country should be facing the same troubles with that dragon blocking the trade route!
THUMP

Then that is all the more reason not to hand any over.
It would prove convenient for us if enemy soldiers were to die.

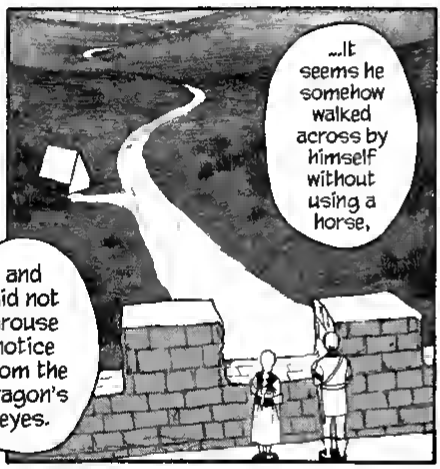
I wish to give them to my fellow soldiers who have collapsed from fever.
Yes.
And so you say you came here by yourself to buy them and take them back to your kingdom?


Father,
...Let's go outside.
SHOOK
What is it?
Yuruka?
Uhm... your meal.
How in the heavens did he get across?
You said that he crossed the border from the Sea Kingdom and came all the way here...
that's the soldier from the Sea Kingdom that you captured earlier, right?
Yes.
Was he able to pass from underneath the dragon's nest?


Those who approach the nest would be killed and eaten, would they not?
They would.
We started battle unaware of that and both suffered losses from it.

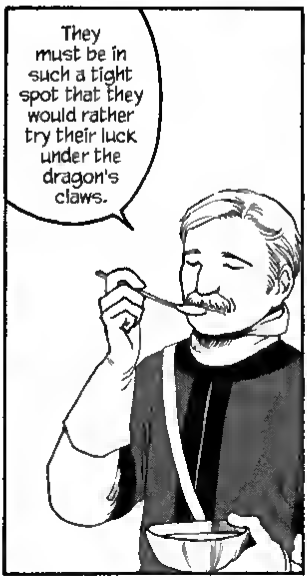
There's only one road that binds us, the Mountain Kingdom, with our enemy, the Sea Kingdom.
The dragon has made her nest and laid her egg right in the middle of it.

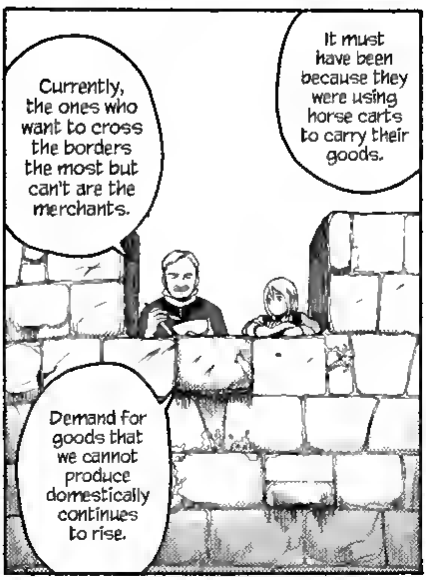
Until now, there have been many that have tried to cross the border,
but they all failed and came running back, barely alive.


...It seems he somehow walked across by himself without using a horse,
and did not arouse notice from the dragon's eyes.

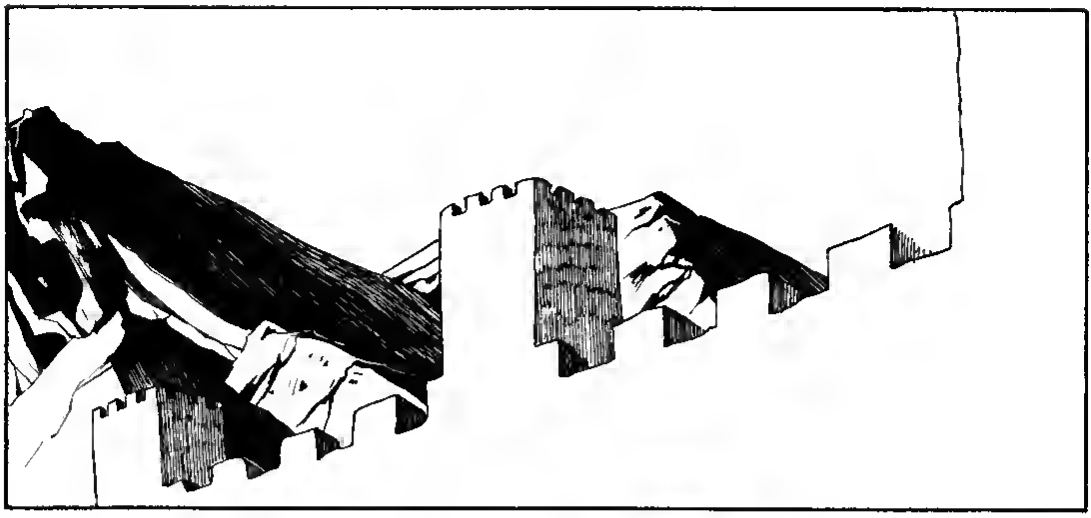
Then how did he...

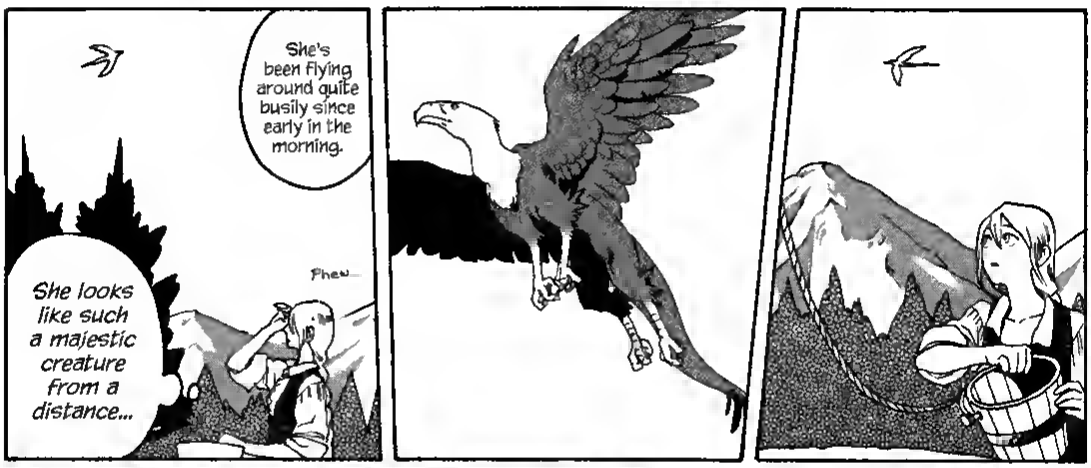
This is quite un-appealing.
Yes.
It's missing a certain something.


They must be in such a tight spot that they would rather try their luck under the dragon's claws.

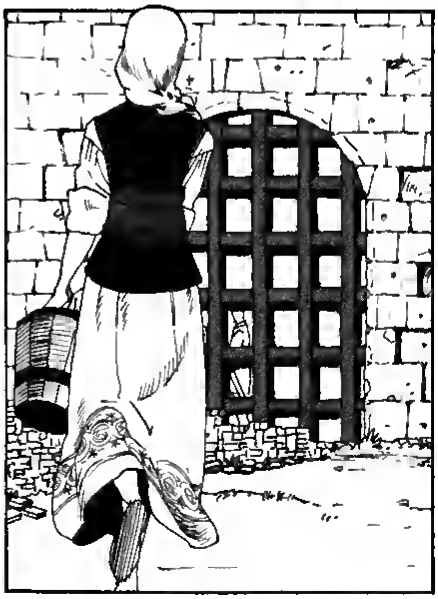

Currently, the ones who want to cross the borders the most but can't are the merchants.
It must have been because they were using horse carts to carry their goods.
Demand for goods that we cannot produce domestically continues to rise.

I hope her chick will fly the nest quickly.
...
I see...
We haven't been able to get our hands on any salt in particular around here.
They told us that we have to use it in moderation until the dragon leaves her nest.
Our teacher told us that the Sea Kingdom was originally part of our territory as well,
but that savages from beyond the sea came and settled there, creating the Sea Kingdom.
And if the unification of the two kingdoms could be realized as soon as possible, that would be wonderful as well.
...
If the Sea Kingdom were to return to our hands,
I would like to go see the ocean.




She's been flying around quite busily since early in the morning.
She looks like such a majestic creature from a distance...
Phew...

Whisper
Whisper



It's so early in the morning,
has something happened?
KACHAK
It's the man from the Sea Kingdom!!
Why is he outside the gates...?
BOW
Ahh...
Father!
What is going on!?
You're letting him get away?
Yuruka...

Why would you do such a thing...?
I proposed a condition for trade.
In exchange for potatoes, I told him to bring salt.
I gave him some potato roots and sent him back.
It's just as it looks.
Salt...?
Right now, soldiers from across the country are gathering here and our consumption of food is increasing.
It is clear that if things continue, we will exhaust our supply of salt before the dragon leaves her nest.
You understand now, don't you?
You have your own work to do. Take care of that.
But if he doesn't keep his promise, then...
Regardless,
it would still be better than keeping him locked up like that and having an extra mouth to feed.

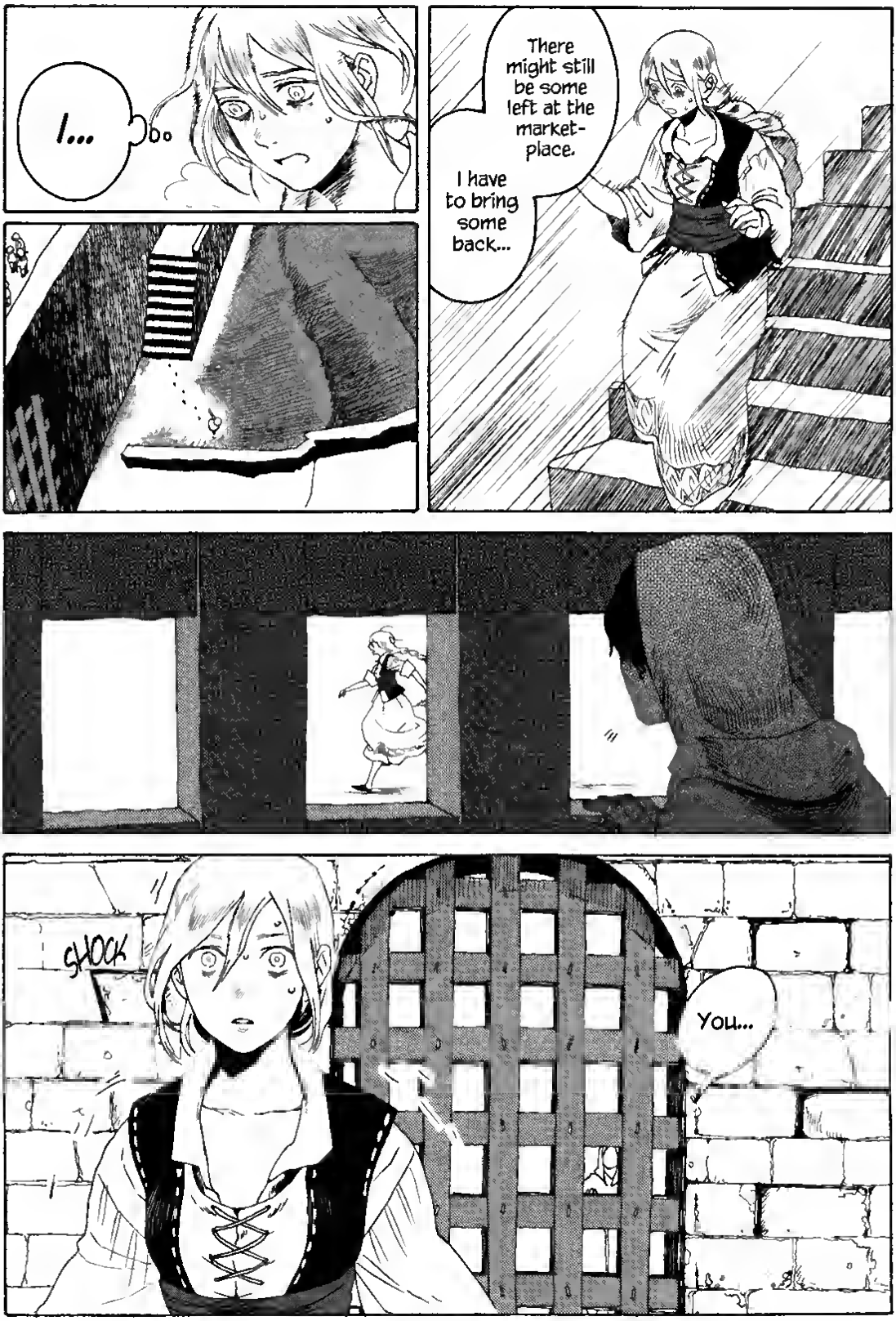
There's nothing in this village.
What a bore.
There's nothing to do for fun at all.
The only thing to look forward to is food.
Didn't they say it would take another half year before the dragon leaves her nest?
Just how long are we going to be kept on standby here?
...
STEP STEP
HA
I'm... going to go get the carrots from the storage-house.
Yuruka?
And even our meals are no good, they're not enough at all...
SIGH
HAHAHA

You just need to bring these vegetables back to where you were before, right?
Let me do it.
Hey, sorry about that.
We know the people of this village are taking care of us.
Salt...
That guy said he would bring them for me.
Hm? What about the carrots?
...
He's slow.
skch
skch

It was the work of one of the deserters a couple of days ago.
I heard word that the salt has completely vanished from the storage-house.
Yes...
With a sudden jump in price, he must be profiting indeed.
It'll be quite a long time 'til then.
A half year...
It seems like the egg has hatched.
The dragon seems a bit more hurried in her movements recently
Another half year and it should leave her nest and fly north.
Should we search for him?
No... even if we find the person, we won't get the salt back.
It would only serve to tire everyone out.

The soldiers, they're...!
Father!
You're the one hurling false accusations at others!
WAAH
WAAH
You think I'm trying to get myself killed or something?
Stop that!
What did you say!?
You were in on it together with him, weren't you!?
There's no way he could carry such a large amount of salt by himself. He had an accomplice!

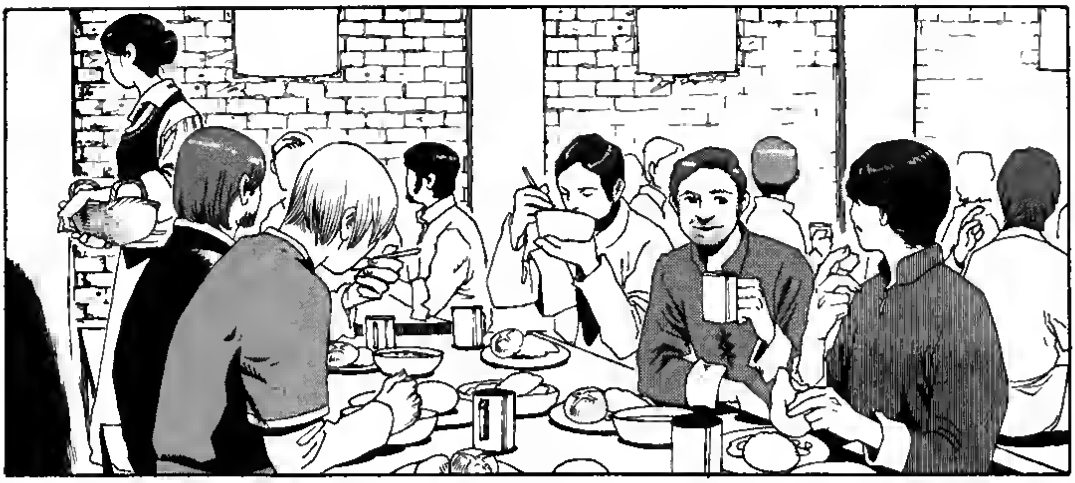
then this wouldn't be happening...
If I'd only kept a close watch at that time...
This is my fault.
do something about this.
I have to


I...
There might still be some left at the market-place.
I have to bring some back...
SHOCK
You...

TENG
Thank goodness.
The gatekeeper wasn't around,
I didn't know what to do...
...
Did something happen?
Whoa!
A brick
CLANG
Wait!
Please hold on!
My name is Sanan.
I'm from the Sea Kingdom, but I mean no harm.
Go back to where you came from!
What did you come here to do!?

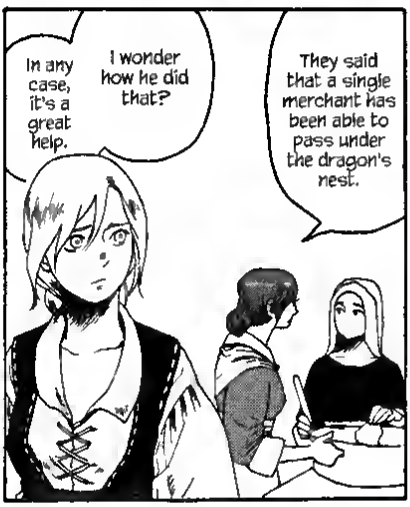
Listen to what—
Hrmm
Did you come here to pester us again?
We don't have a single thing left to give to you anymore!
Stop that!
grab
Father!
you...
I have to say,
Father...
Of course I did.
You've brought what you promised, yes?
...
You be silent.
No,
we can't trust him!

Thanks to your kindness, I was able to save the lives of my comrades.
I did not know how best to show my appreciation...
...
Salt...
It's over here.
This is all because I didn't keep a close watch...
Yuruka!
We don't even know if there's something inside.
Must we take it?
Are we...
going to accept this?
Is this amount insufficient?
Is there some sort of problem you're dealing with?
I...
have a request to ask of you.
Excuse me...
We decided on this transaction before any of that happened.
No matter what happened, we have found ourselves in need of salt.
You're wrong.
This is all because I let the salt get stolen.



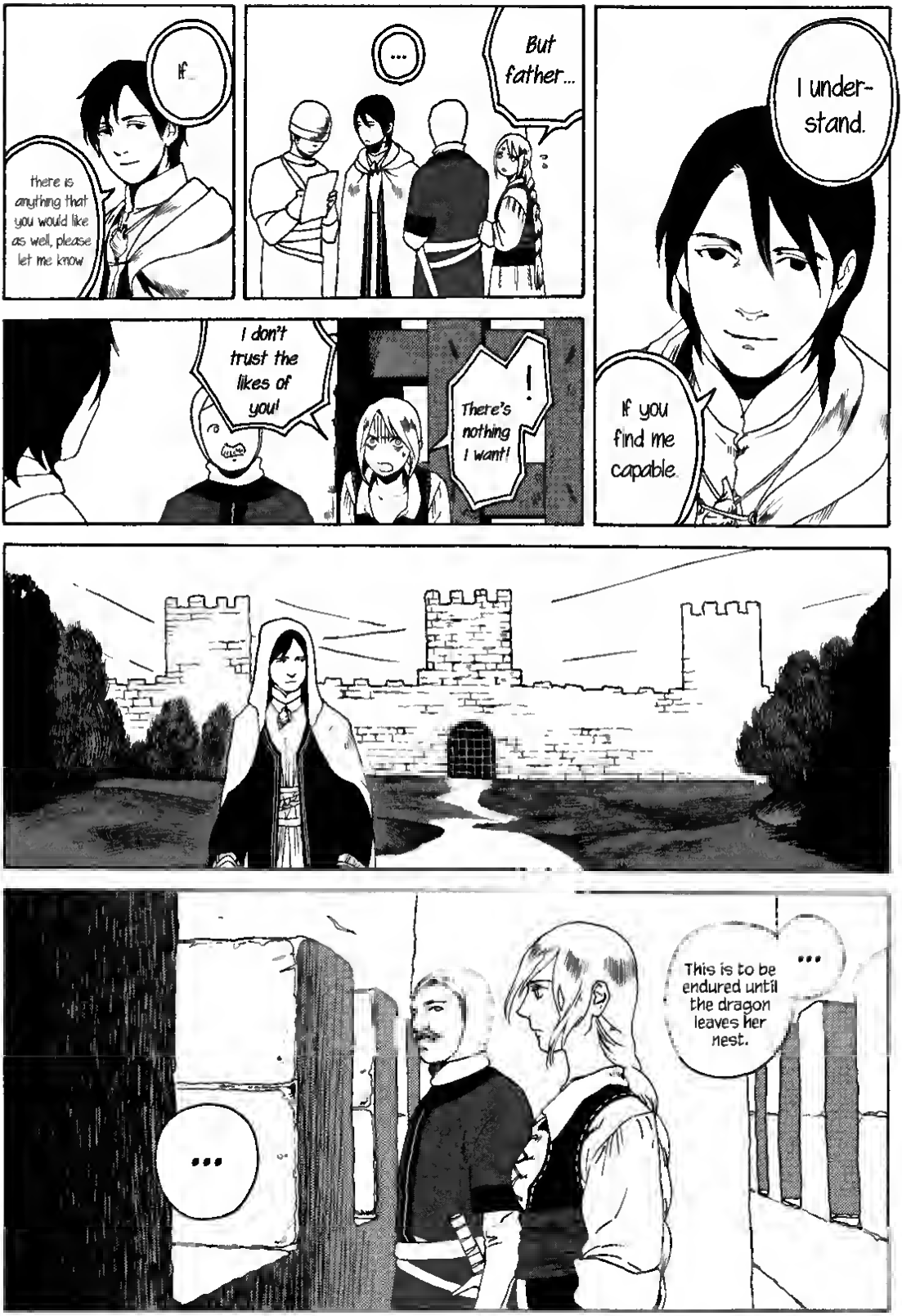
Is there anything else your kingdom lacks other than medicine?

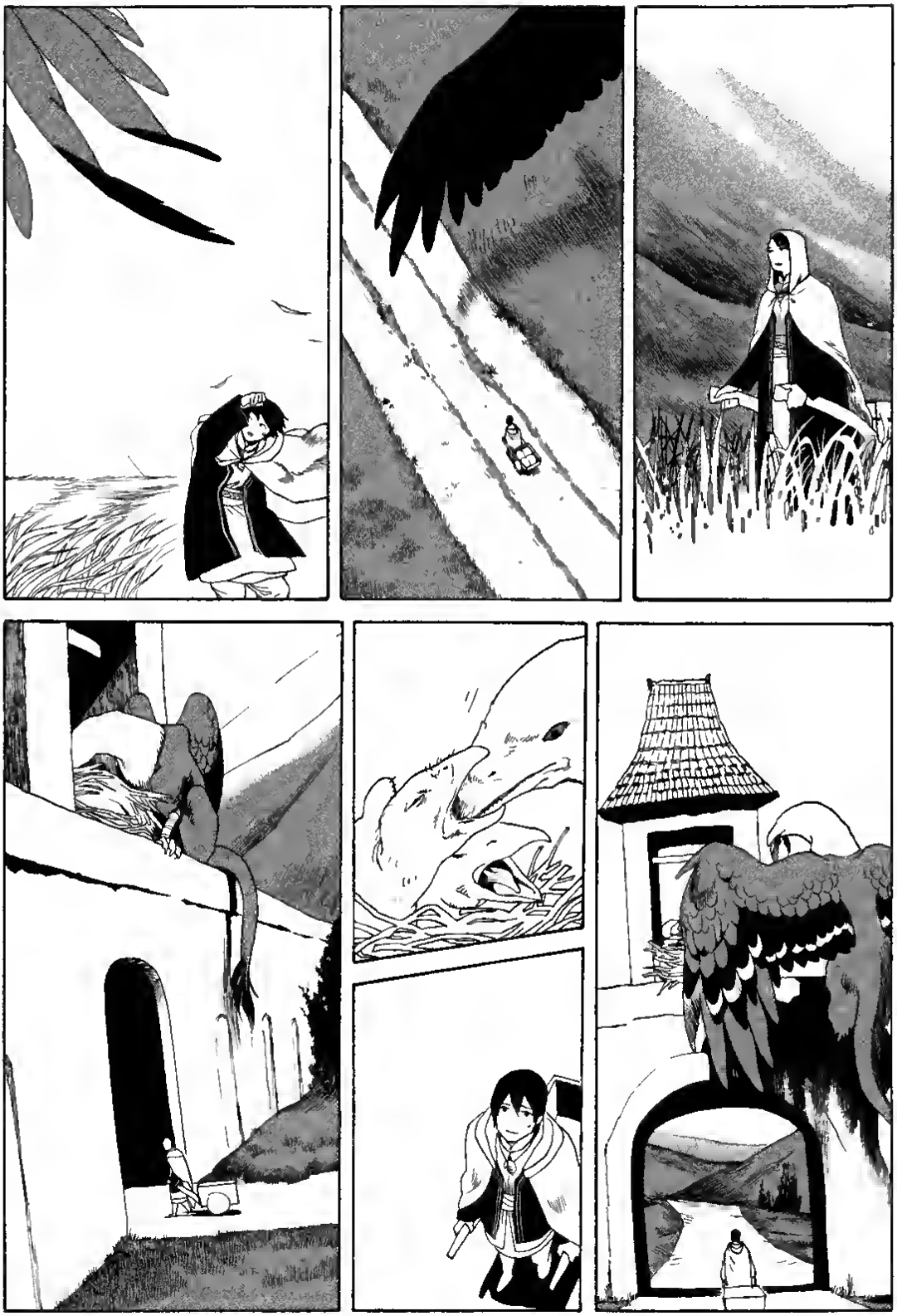
...

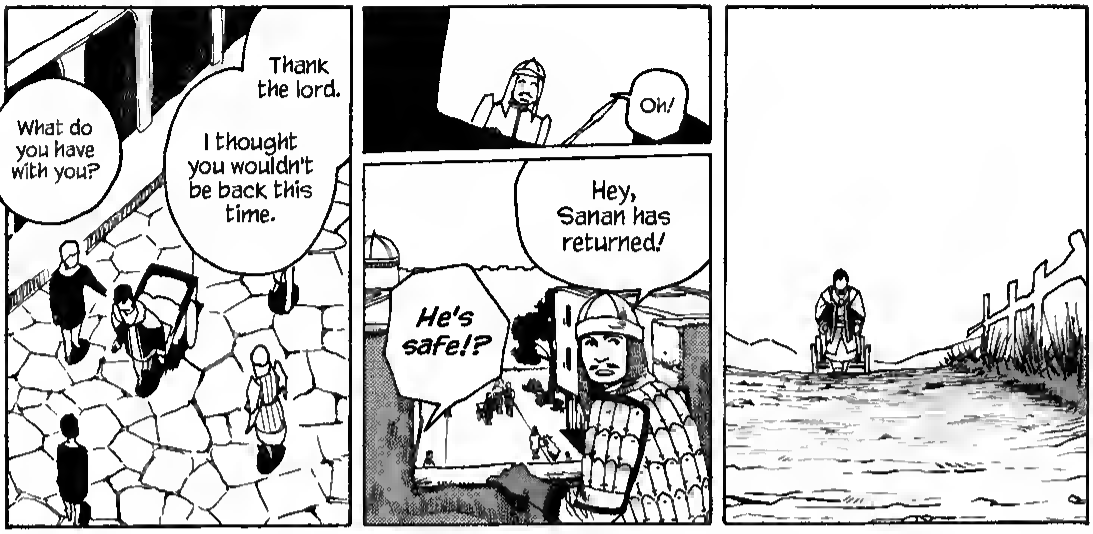

In any case, it's a great help.
I wonder how he did that?
They said that a single merchant has been able to pass under the dragon's nest.

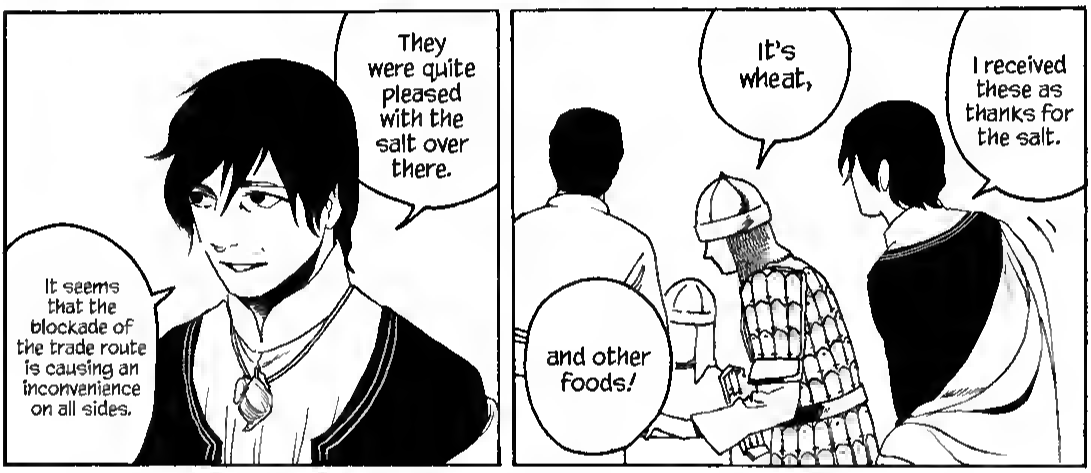
I would like you to bring some more salt again
We will provide items of corresponding value

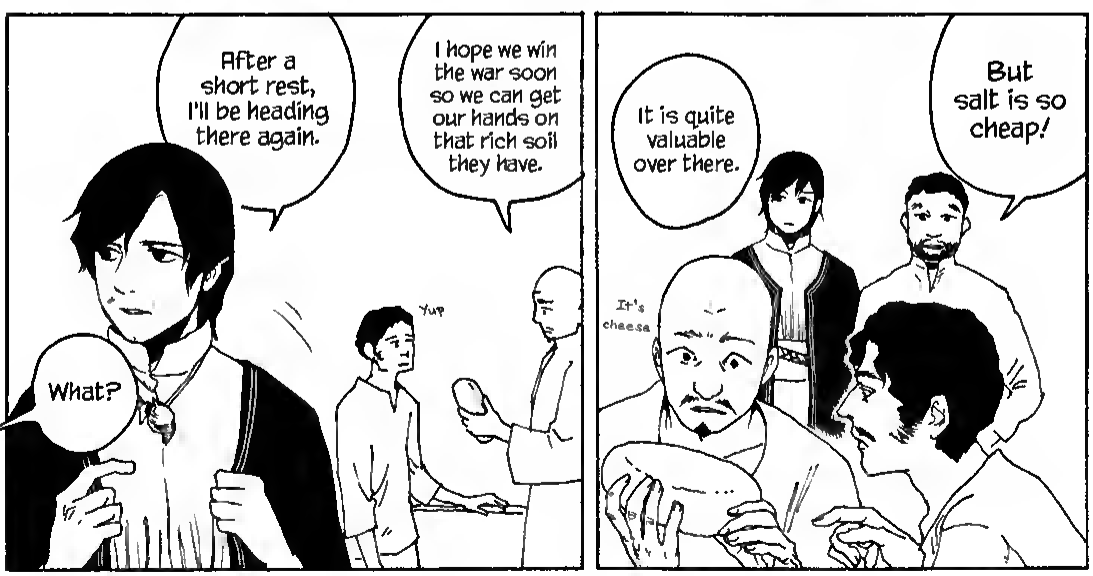
Well... there are a few things
If you wish, you may have some of them
?!
In exchange,


If...
there is anything that you would like as well, please let me know
...
But father...
I understand.
If you find me capable.
I don't trust the likes of you!
There's nothing I want!
This is to be endured until the dragon leaves her nest.
...
...




What do you have with you?
Thank the lord.
I thought you wouldn't be back this time.
Oh!
Hey, Sanan has returned!
He's safe!?


It seems that the blockade of the trade route is causing an inconvenience on all sides.
They were quite pleased with the salt over there.
and other foods!
It's wheat,
I received these as thanks for the salt.

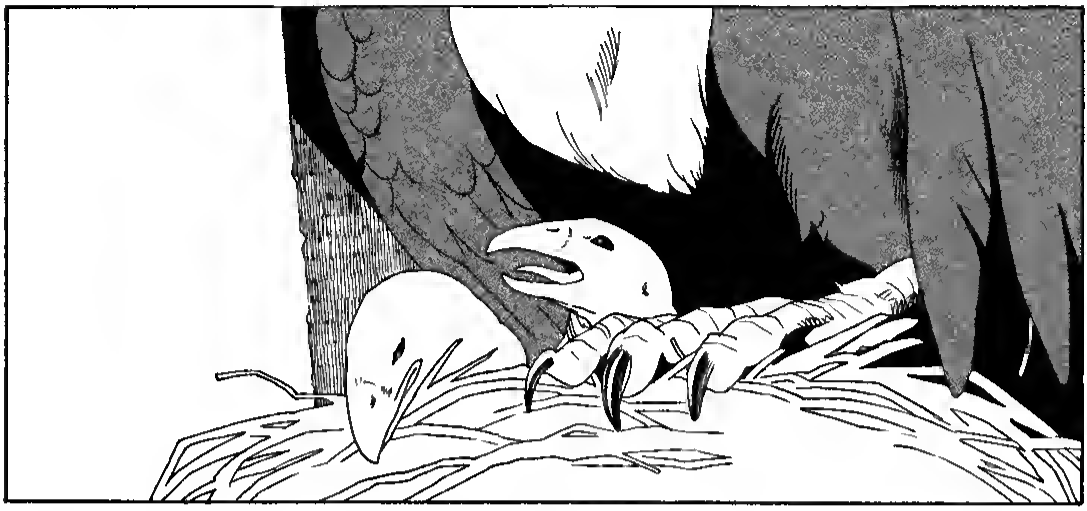

What?
After a short rest, I'll be heading there again.
I hope we win the war soon so we can get our hands on that rich soil they have.
Yup
It is quite valuable over there.
But salt is so cheap!
It's cheese

I plan on making round trips until the war begins.
I can easily bring things that we would've needed to cross the ocean to find.
I suppose one has to put up with certain things in desperate times.
It may be a small annoyance, but it would also be quite foolish to be too prideful and ruin ourselves.
Would that really work out well?
Please stop! That's too much even for a joke!
What if we mix in poison that will slowly build in their stomachs?
We can control it so that it'll take effect just as we begin battle.
But if you think about it, this is an unmatched chance to find out everything about the inner workings of our enemies.
What do you think?
Our apologies.
Please don't get so mad.
How could you think of something so cowardly when they have given us their trust?
Have you no shame?

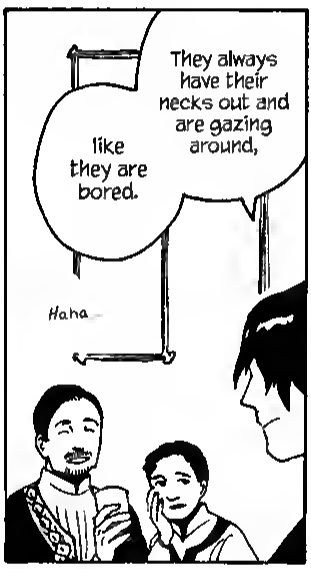
I just don't want to shoulder any strange debts come time to fight.
That's a separate issue.
will you be all right, Sarian?
If you continue to do what you're doing...
But eventually we will have to cross swords with them.
the salt is here.
Father,
Oh.
Pfff...

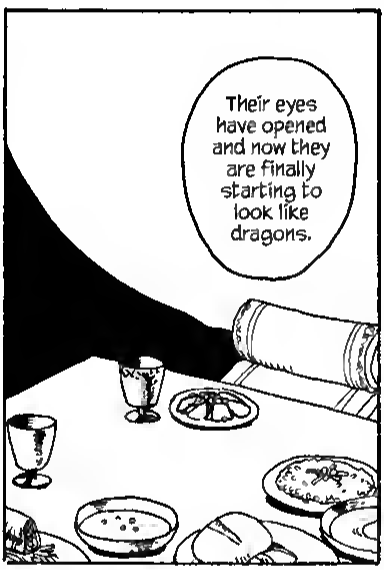
SULK
I've brought what was asked,
and had some spare room, so I chose a few extra things to bring with me.
What the hell is this?
It's salt.
There's wine too.
CHATTER
CHATTER
Oh no.
I forgot to bring a souvenir for you.
I don't need one...!
A shell?
That is what a shell is?
Oh, this?
You place a wish inside the shell, make a hole in it, and tie a string through it.
It's a kind of prayer to make it come true.
Even the men in your kingdom wear necklaces?
How unusual.
It's not just full of pretty things like this.
Are there a lot of those things in the sea?

The other day,
I saw the baby dragons for the first time.
Oh, that's right
Really?
They were actively taking food from their parents.
Yeah.
...
T-Thank you.
Baby frogs are tadpoles, aren't they?
How strange.
Ahahah
Yeah, you're right.
HE!
They're more like baby frogs than they are dragons.
But their wings haven't grown in yet, and the only thing big about them are their mouths.
Like this
How many chicks does it have?
Did you really see the baby dragons?
It's even been chasing prey around here.
That's a lot of work.
I understand how it feels.
I see!
So that's why it's been so busy.
Two.



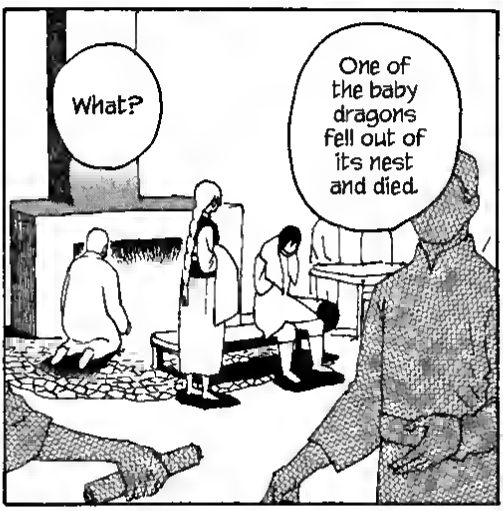
My sword's about to go dull.
Ahhh, I really wish they would hurry up and leave their nests.

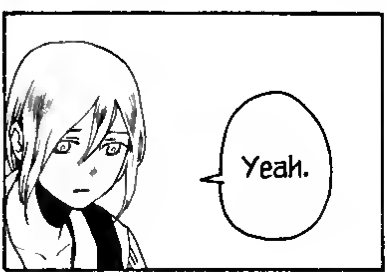

They always have their necks out and are gazing around, like they are bored.
Haha

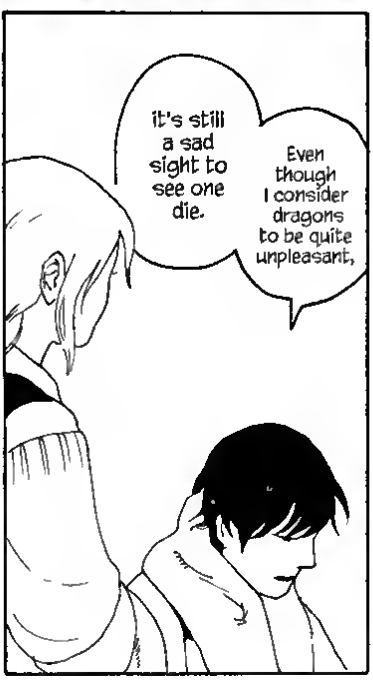

Their eyes have opened and now they are finally starting to look like dragons.

...Yes...

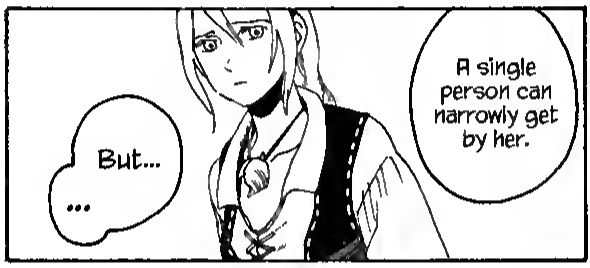
How did that happen?
It was natural selection. The weaker one was toppled from its nest.


What?
One of the baby dragons fell out of its nest and died.


Yeah.


it's still a sad sight to see one die.
Even though I consider dragons to be quite unpleasant,

That would be difficult
It might see that as a hostile target.
If you could just use a horse, it'd make things considerably easier.

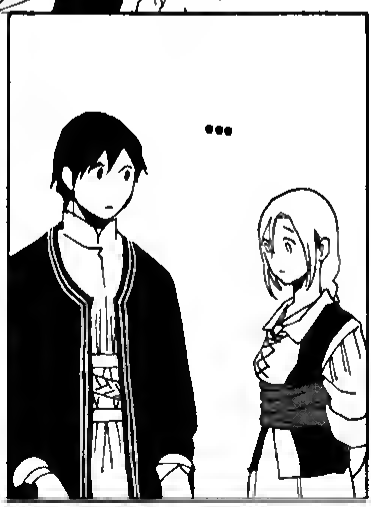

But...
...
A single person can narrowly get by her.

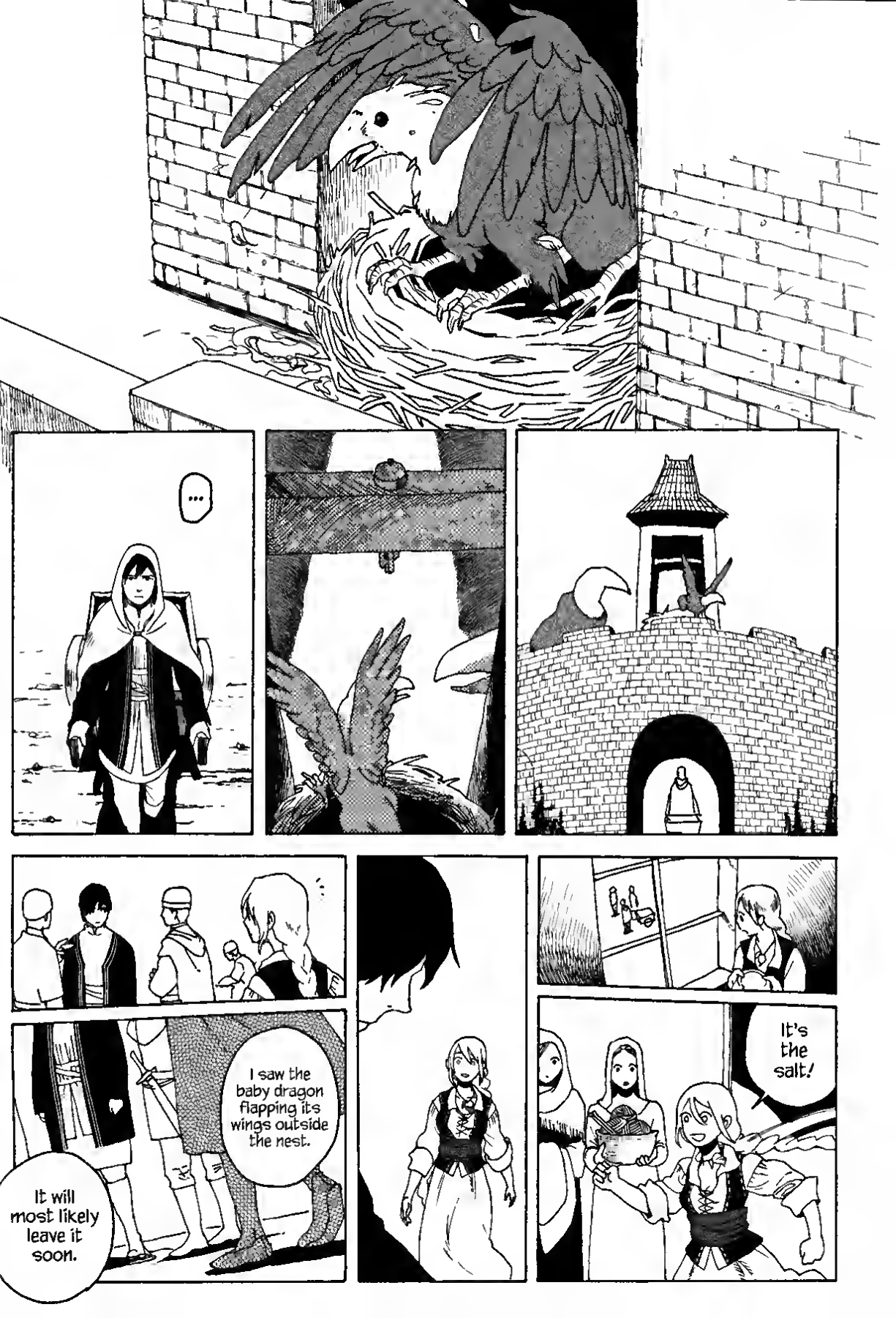
See you again.
Yes, thank you as always.

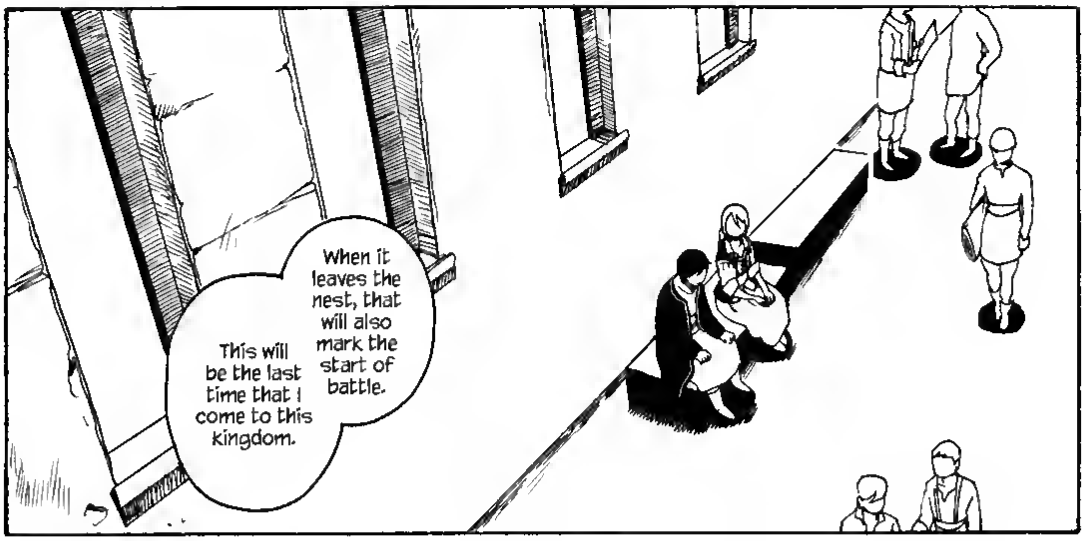
if only that dragon were not there,
then people from both countries would be able to come and go.

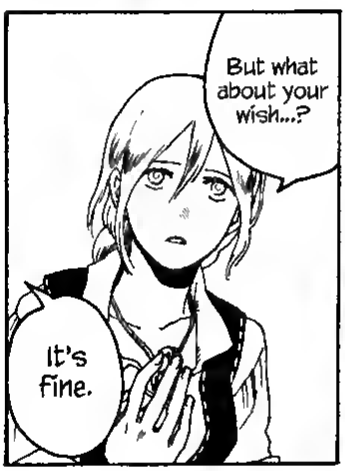
That's right.
If the dragon weren't there, then we would be fighting against one another right now.

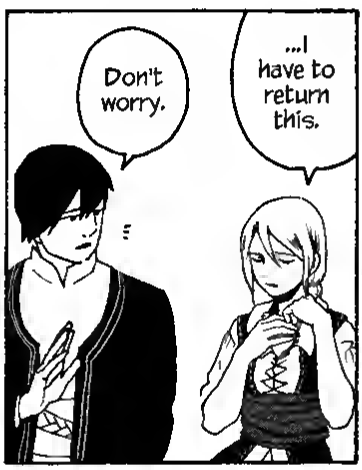
Ah...!

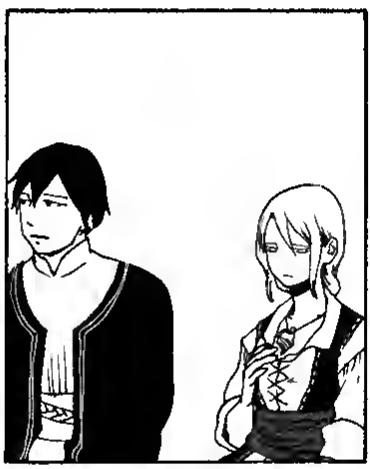

...


...
I saw the baby dragon flapping its wings outside the nest.
It will most likely leave it soon.
It's the salt!


This will be the last time that I come to this kingdom.
When it leaves the nest, that will also mark the start of battle.

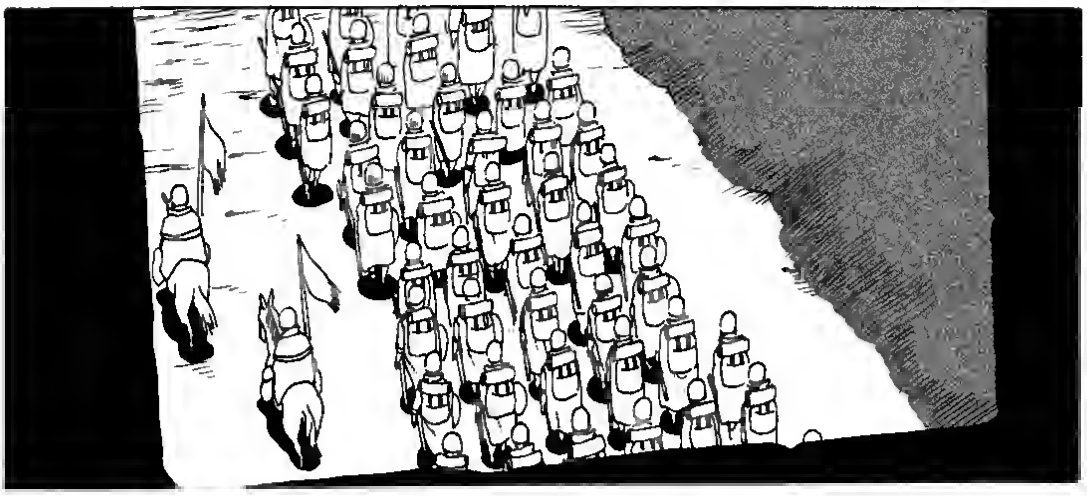

But what about your wish...?
It's fine.


Don't worry.
...I have to return this.

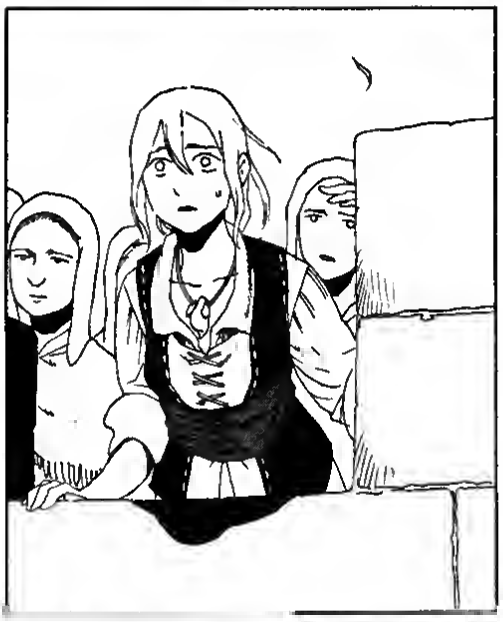


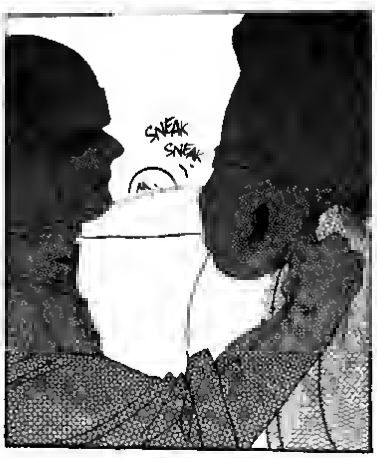
But that is a wish I no longer hope will come true.
...

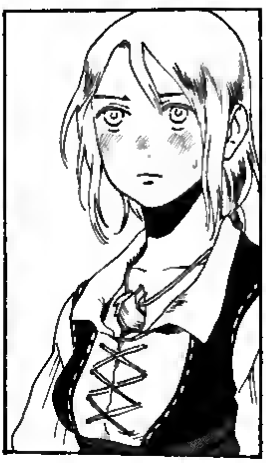
I made a wish that we would win this war.

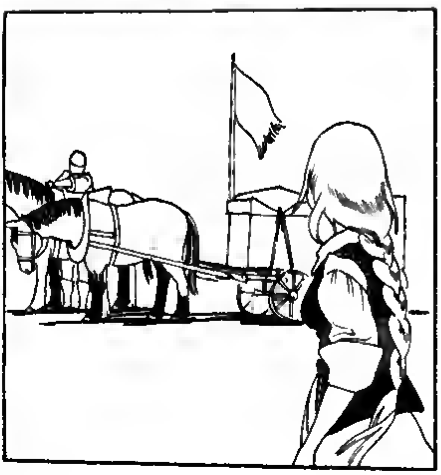


What should I do...?
What should I do?



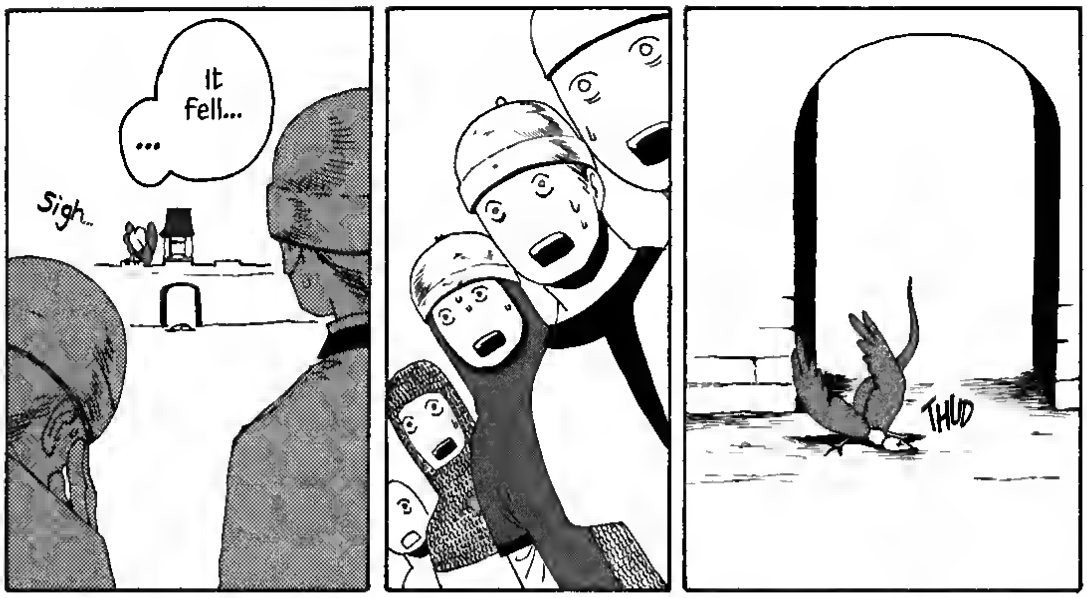

SNEAK
SNEAK

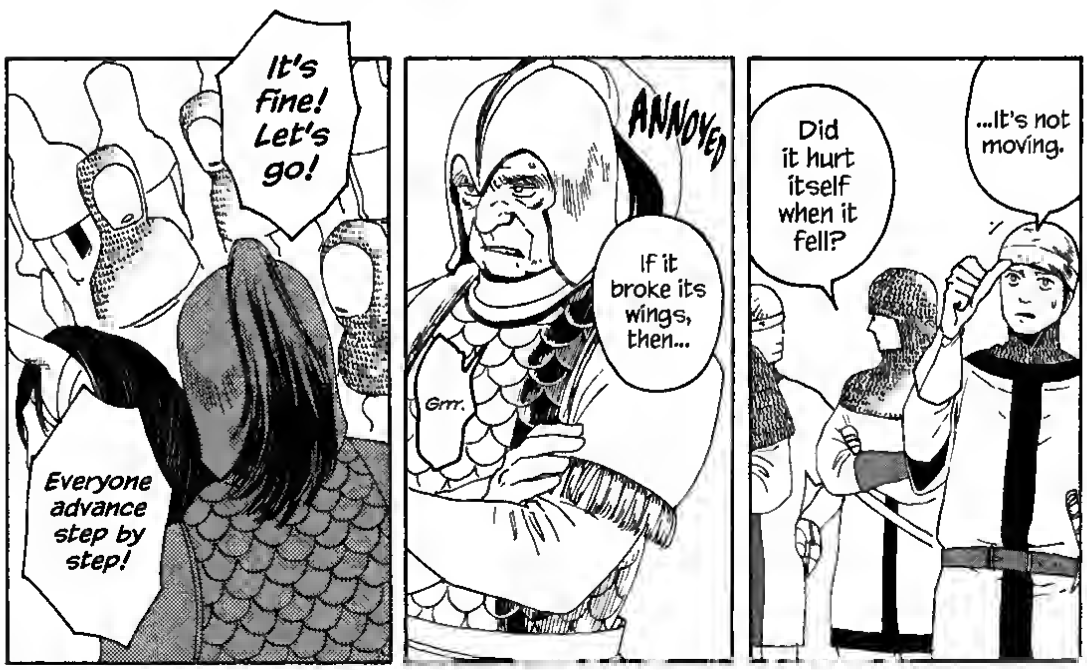




Burn the nest and get rid of it right away.
By doing that, we'll make sure the dragons won't come back again.
We'll charge at the same time the dragons leave their nest!
Be ready to attack at any moment, don't get comfortable!

Hap
!
Hey!
The baby dragon...!
AH...!

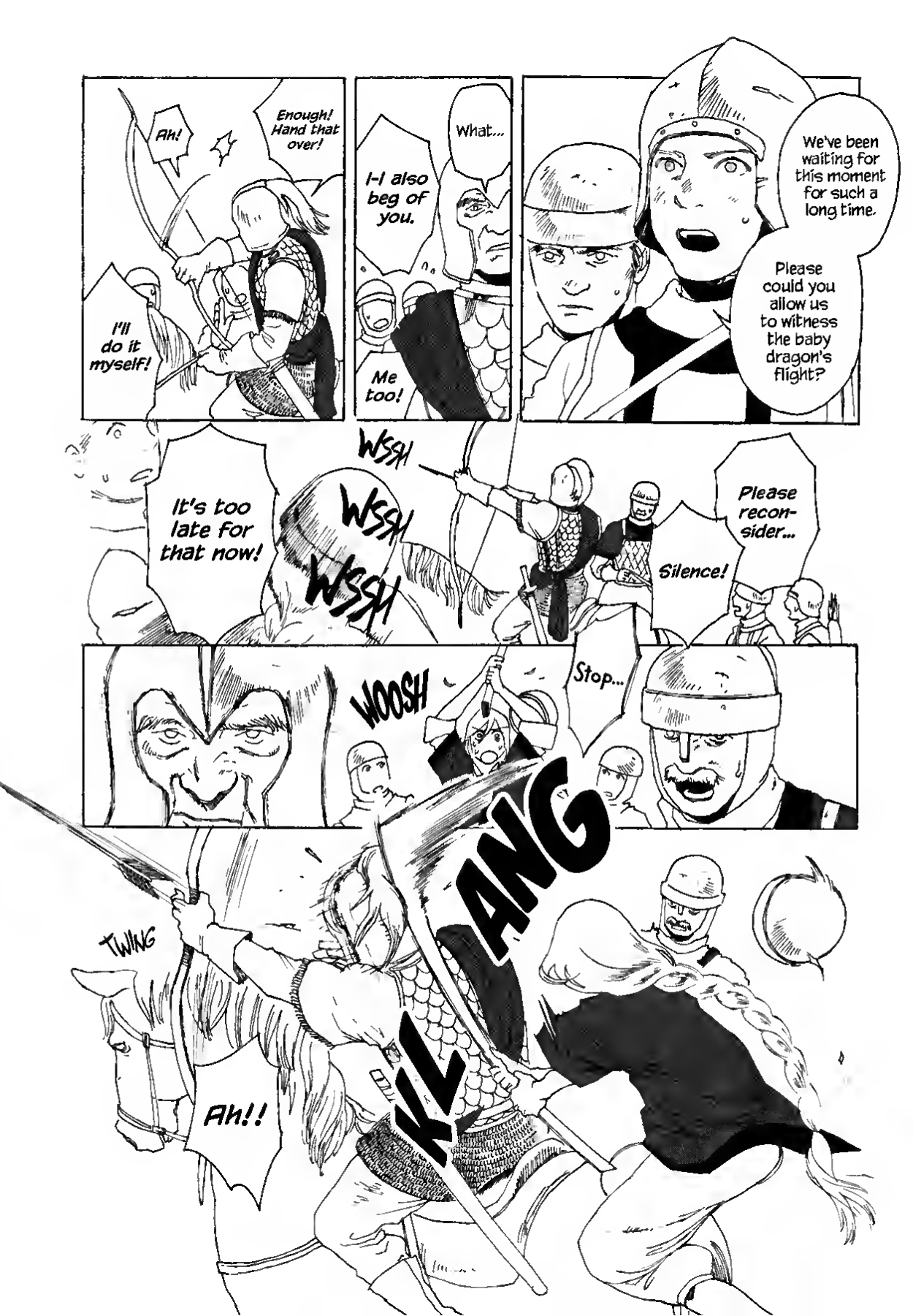

It fell...
...
Sigh...
THUD


It's fine! Let's go!
Everyone advance step by step!
ANNOYED
If it broke its wings, then...
Grrr.
Did it hurt itself when it fell?
...It's not moving.

...
Then that means that now is the best chance we have!
Gradually shorten the distance!
Drive them over to that side!
But if we do that, the mother dragon will...
There's only one of them to deal with.
She'll be back right away.
MURMUR
The Mountain Kingdom's army appears to be on the march.
!
How foolish.
It is most likely that it cannot move because we have fenced in it's surroundings.
No, you should make the order to retreat for now.
The baby dragon will surely fly away.
Fine, then we shall advance as well!
They're aiming for the moment that the mother dragon is away.

Advance!
Those of you in the vanguard will be rewarded handsomely.
You are saying to ignore the enemy that is right before our very eyes!?
Do you really think I would engage in such idiocy!?
GYAA!
KYU...
What is going on? Don't let the pace fall...

Tighten the guard!
Eek!
The mother dragon has returned!
Shoot the baby dragon!
Wha—
Bowmen!
Good. I've thought of something brilliant.
Retreat!
Ahh!
Ahh!
Haha!
How amusing.
P-
Please reconsider.
Bowmen!
Make haste!
...
Those dragons don't know the difference between our foes and our allies.
But...
If you do that, then we'll bear the attack of the dragon as well.


Ah!
Enough! Hand that over!
I'll do it myself!
What...
I-I also beg of you.
Me too!
We've been waiting for this moment for such a long time.
Please could you allow us to witness the baby dragon's flight?
It's too late for that now!
WSSH
WSSH
WSSH
Please recon-sider...
Silence!
Stop...
WOOSH
TWANG
Ah!!
KL
ANG

flap
THUNK
Ah!
Ah!
Ah!
THUD
That's right!
You can do it!
SLAKish
Fly...!

GRAB
Please fly...!
SLAPPLSH
flap
flap
SLAPPLSH
SLAPPLSH

It flew!
WAH
That damn runt got me so scared!
Honestly, what a horrid job it did of flying.
Take a look at the other side.
They're all so happy that it flew.
Haha, I just can't seem to bring myself to hate them.
Ahahaha...
surprise

please take a look,
everyone has the same smile on their faces.
It is impossible to tell the difference between foe and ally.
With all due respect...
What is going on here?
...
The war has just begun...
...
Hey, what's over there?
Sigh...
On the steeple
I slipped into the army and got here.
Why are you over here...?
How could you do something so dangerous!
Yuruka...!?

A wish?
It's because... I made a wish
To be able to see the sea
together with you by my side

The First Story ◉ The End

Seven Little Sons Of the Dragon

The Second Story

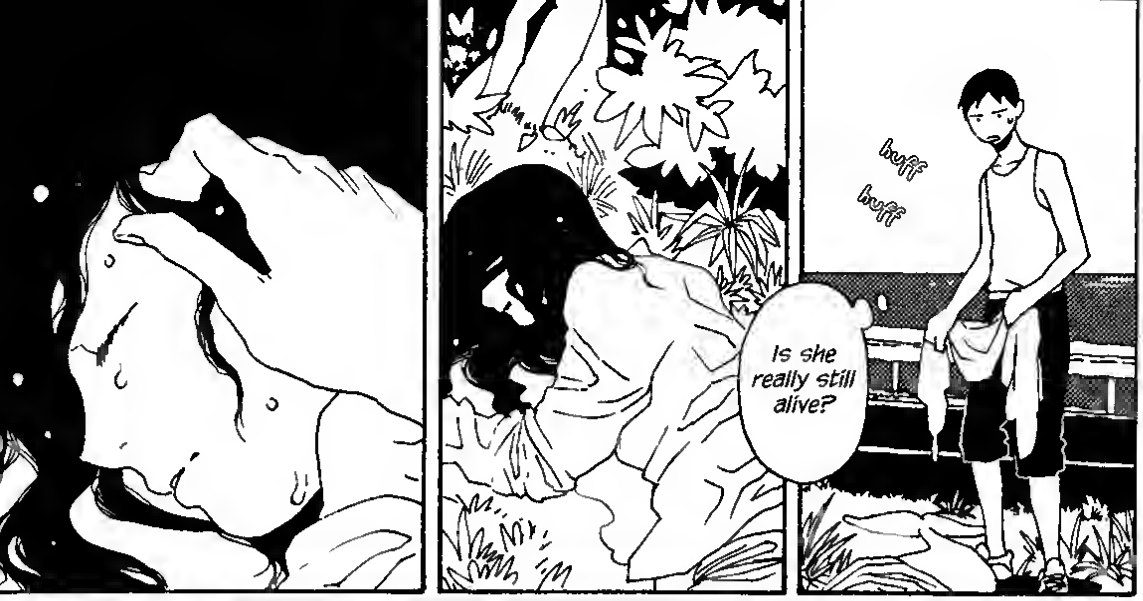
Mermaid Sanctuary

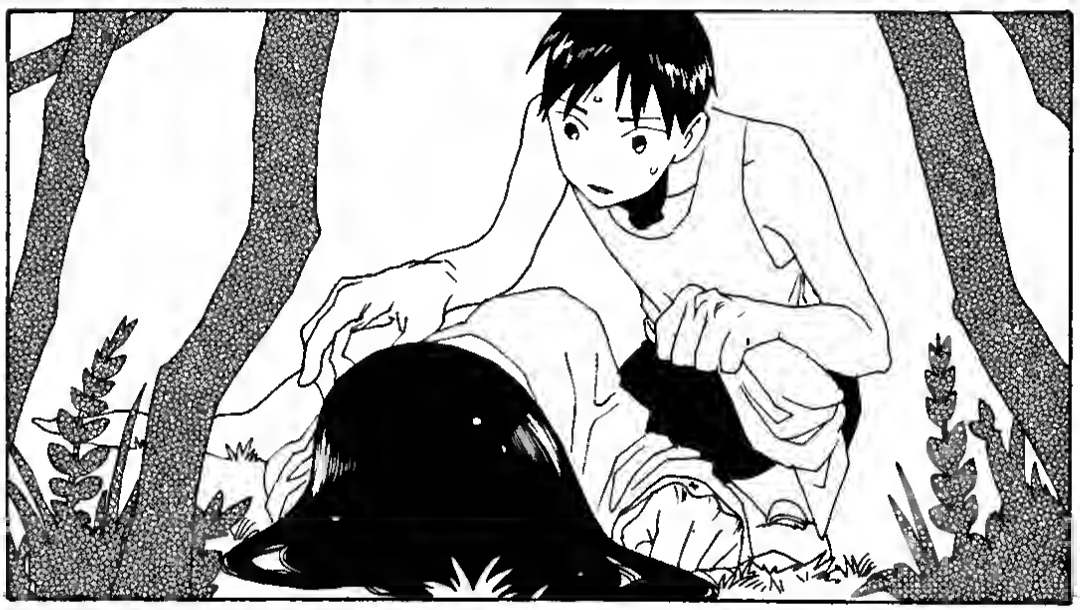
Seven Little Sons Of the Dragon
The Second Story
Mermaid Sanctuary

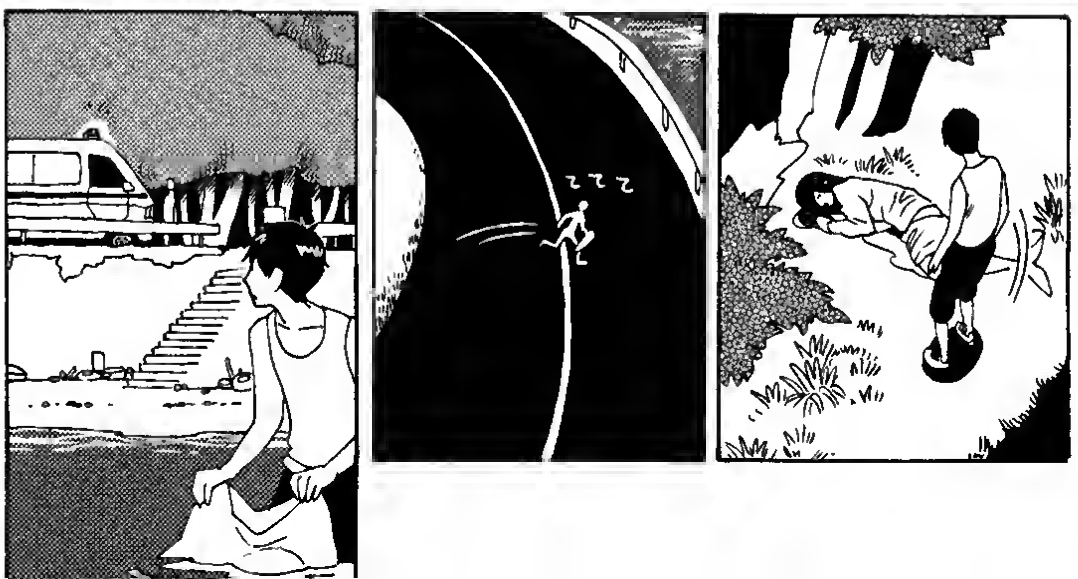
BRRRRING
BRRRRING
BRRR-
HAMA-KUN? IT'S ME, JUN.
I WAS JUST ON MY WAY HOME, BUT...
...OH,
Yeah?

There's this mermaid that's collapsed
on the side of the hill in a brush.
It's not moving, but it looks like it's still alive.
What should I do?
Call the police? Call an ambulance? What's even the number for that again?
...
LEAVE IT BE.
Huh?
MERMAIDS DON'T HAVE ANY MONEY.
SO YOU'LL BE THE ONE THAT'LL GET STUCK WITH ALL THE MEDICAL BILLS.
WELL, STILL...
Hama!
Sorry, Jun,
I've got club activities so I'm hanging up.
Call Ended
Azai Jun
click
...
BEEP BEEP

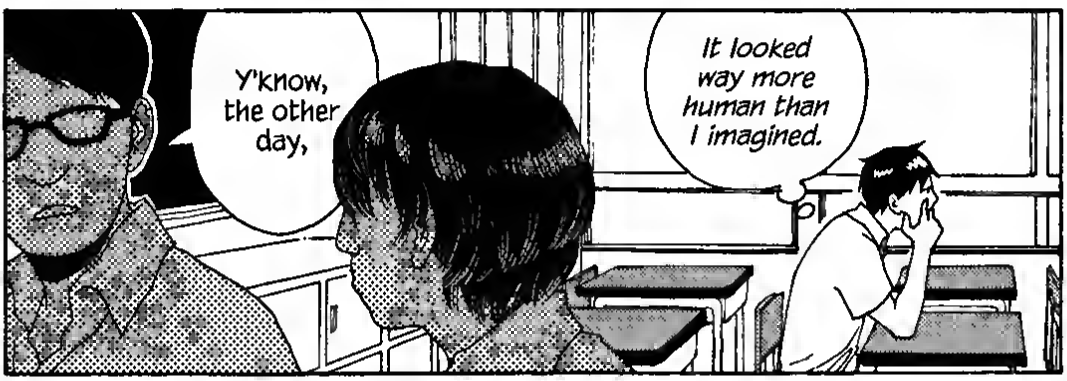
VROOM
drip
drip
PLOP
VRRR
SQUEEZE
drip
drip


huff
huff
Is she really still alive?




z z z

That was the first time
I saw a mermaid so close up.

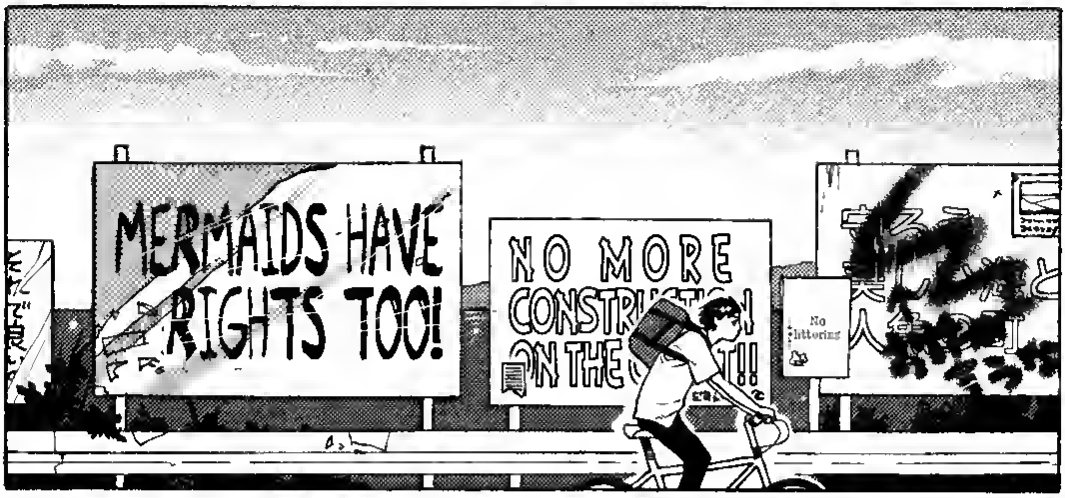

It looked way more human than I imagined.
Y'know, the other day,

on the way home, I hit a mermaid on my bike.
Really?
It freaked me out.
Well, it's not like you're gonna get arrested for hitting a mermaid or anything.
But it didn't feel right, you know.
Be-sides,
Hama's...
Ah.

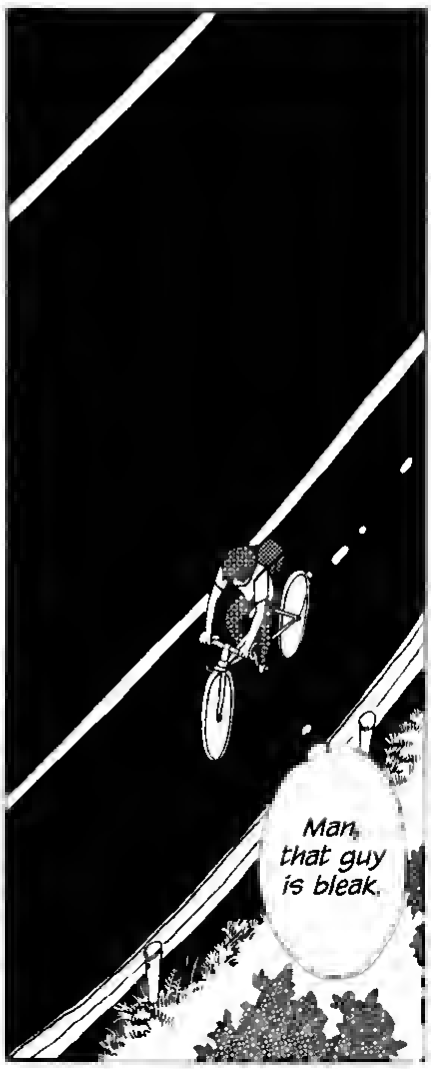
...

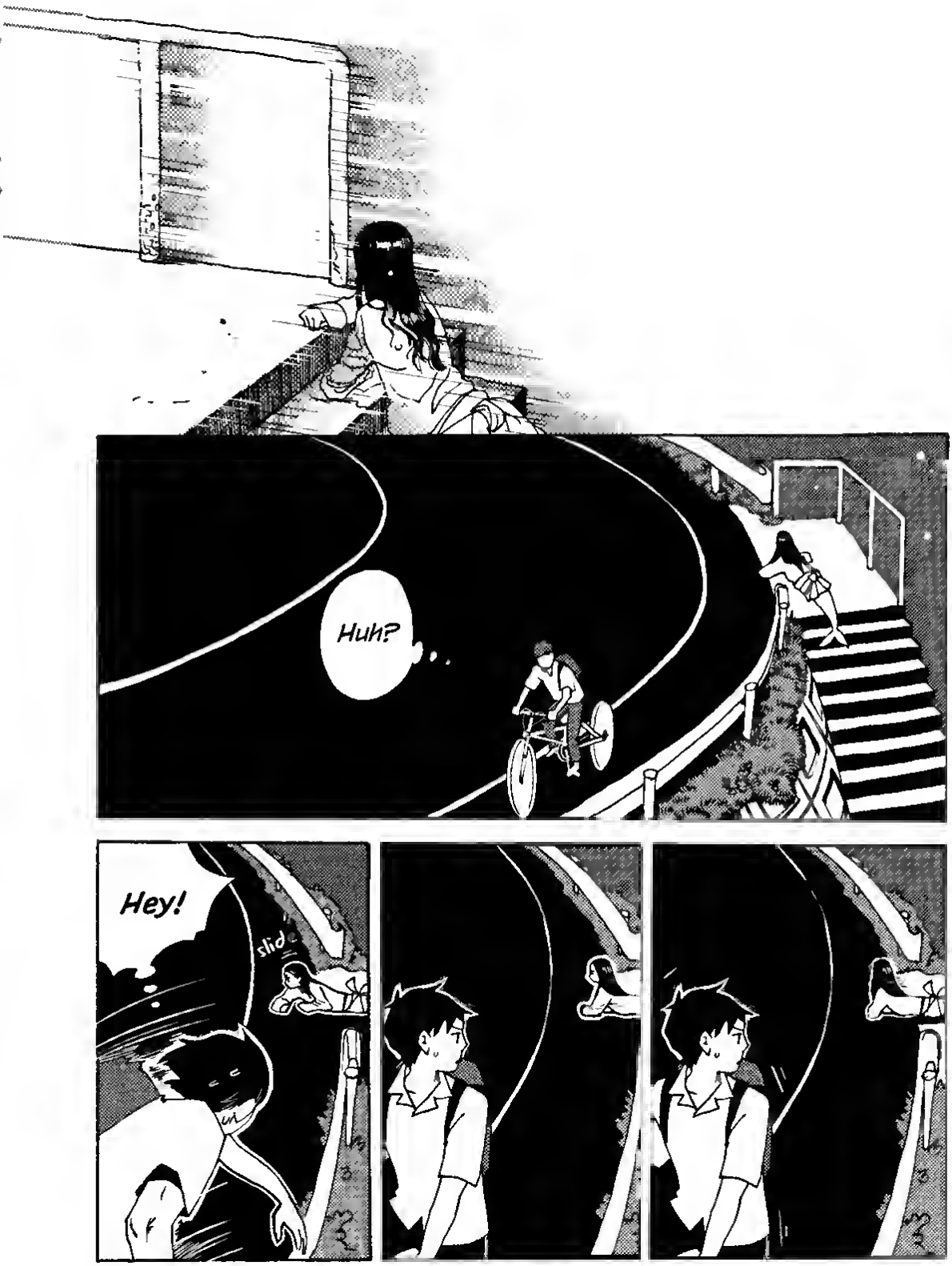
...Huh?
You're probably flat broke since your insurance didn't cover it, right?
Wanna eat?
Should I buy you something?
...
No.
Once the emergency worker got her back in the sea, she was fine and swam away.
Oh.
What happened to your face?
...
So you ended up calling an ambulance after all.

Really?
You're going to leave and go where?
Dunno...
I told my dad...
that I was gonna leave this place after I graduated from high-school and I got hit.
But it'd be way better than...
staying in a small town like this, scrambling for fish against mermaids while getting bashed for it,
am I right?
Mermaids aren't human.
I guess...
They're just animals that have mimicked humans.


MERMAIDS HAVE RIGHTS TOO!
NO MORE
No littering

WHSSH


Man, that guy is bleak.


Huh?
Hey!
slid

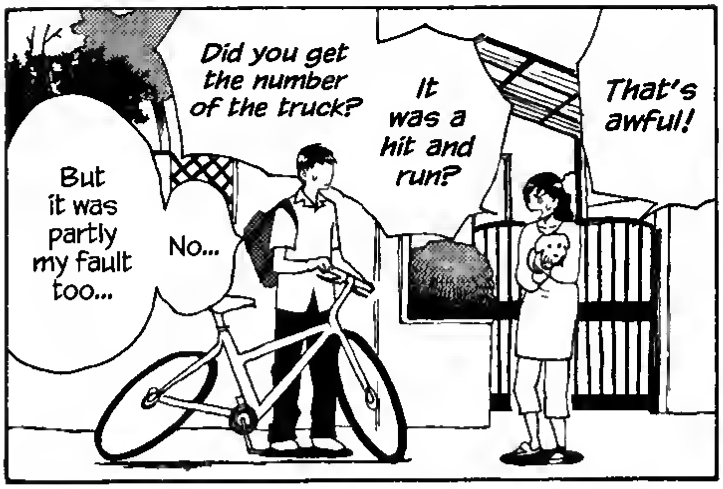
You can't do that!
SHock
Hey!
Stop!
VAVSSH
CRACK

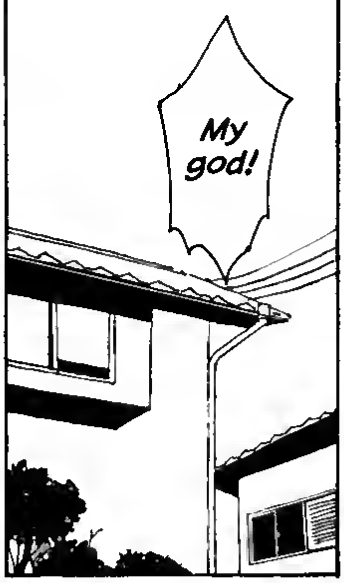
Danger!
High-way bad!
Under-stand?
Ugahhh!
Ahhh!

That takes care of that...
PLOP
shoo
shoo
??
?
What are you even trying to do...?
You planning on doing this until you get hit by a car?
Hey...
That's my school.
Huh...?
Go back to the sea!
...
...

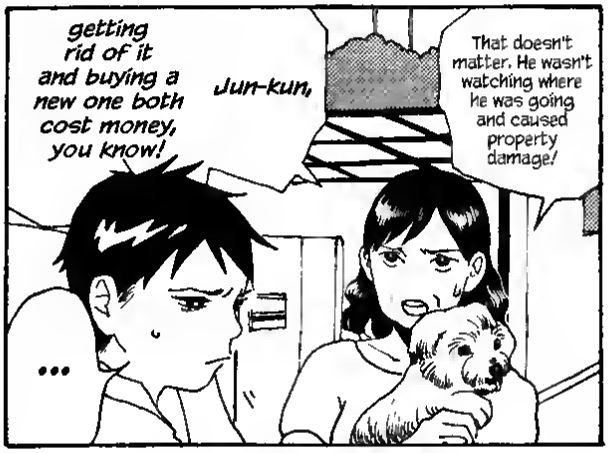
What I'm saying is getting through to her!
Whoa, this is amazing.
nod nod
You want to go to the school?
GRAB
Did you pick it up somewhere?
...What's up with that shirt?
I'm sort of moved by all this.
She's not human! She's not human!
Damn...
She's cute...
Uh, I'm sorry...

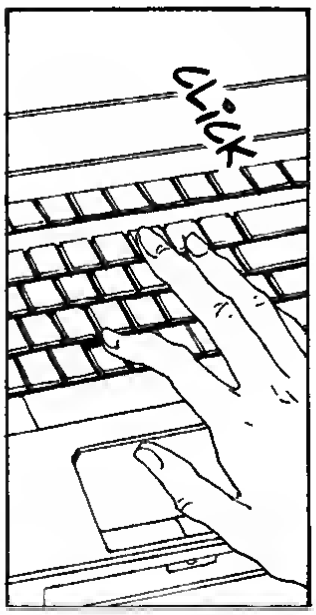
But you see, that's impossible.
Impossible understand?
You're not gonna get anywhere crawling around on the baked asphalt.
You probably collapsed from doing that last time, right?
She's not getting it at all.
This isn't working.
ha ha ha
With things as they are now, she'll definitely do it again.
Hrm.
Dang it.
...Okay.
Leave it to me.
?
Then she must've collapsed from heatstroke or sunstroke that time.
The temperature of the asphalt reaches up to 60 degrees celsius in the middle of summer.
Over there
They're always sunbathing over there, so that means
they wouldn't die or anything from getting dried out.


Did you get the number of the truck?
It was a hit and run?
That's awful!
But it was partly my fault too...
No...

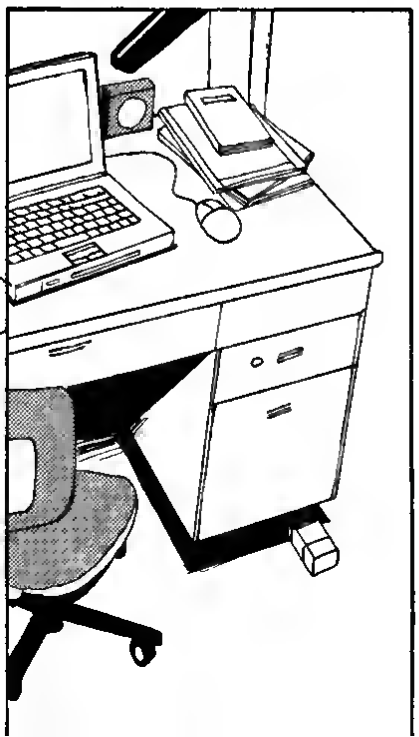

My god!

Property damage, huh...?


getting rid of it and buying a new one both cost money, you know!
Jun-kun,
That doesn't matter. He wasn't watching where he was going and caused property damage!
...


CLICK

Mermaids are not humans, so what kind of crime would it be if you ran over one?



Protection & Human Rights for Mermaids

In the case of accidents that involve mermaids often citizens concerned with lobbying for "human rights"

News for Accidents involving Mermaids

Fishing boat accident in the "Town of Mermaids"

6 hours ago
A fishing boat accident involving a mermaid has occured in Yamaguchi prefecture, Iwakuni City ; was determined to be innocent
The incident occurred three years ago and the case has continued

Mermaid gets stuck in boat propeller

click

Go

Mermaids Accidents

Search

Oil Spill From Tanker Causes [illegible]ge to Mermaid Colony

Is it Murder? 230 People Respond to our Questionnaire

A National First
An Exposé on Prostitution Using Mermaids

[illegible]ogizes for Verbal Gaffe, Mermaids Don't Matter"

Fisherman Cleared of "Homicide" Charges Receives Threatening Letters

Zoologist Points to Ecosystem Damage From Artificially Feeding Mermaids

Protection Groups Protest, Relationship With Local Fishermen Worsen

Morals Questioned

Mermaids are

Continue to Have Misgivings

Ughh...

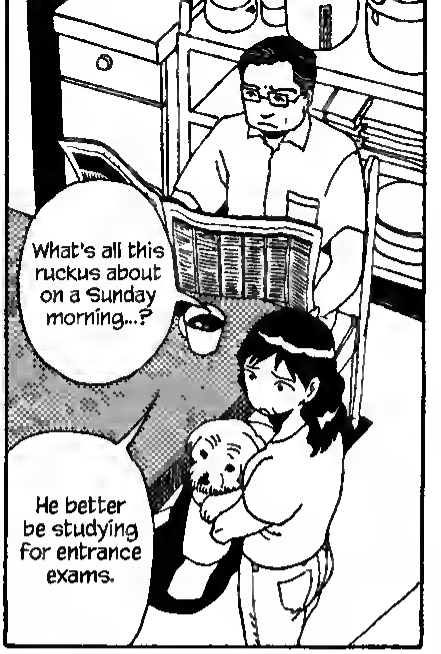
Is this really the manner in which such horrible incidents should be treated? Please provide human rights to the mermaids.

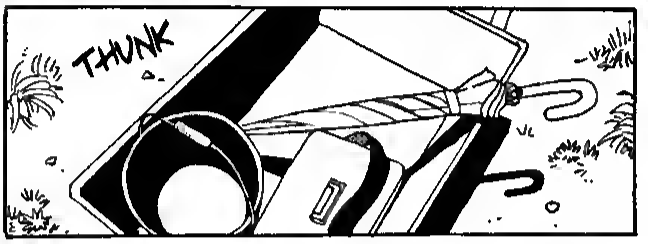
MIDI

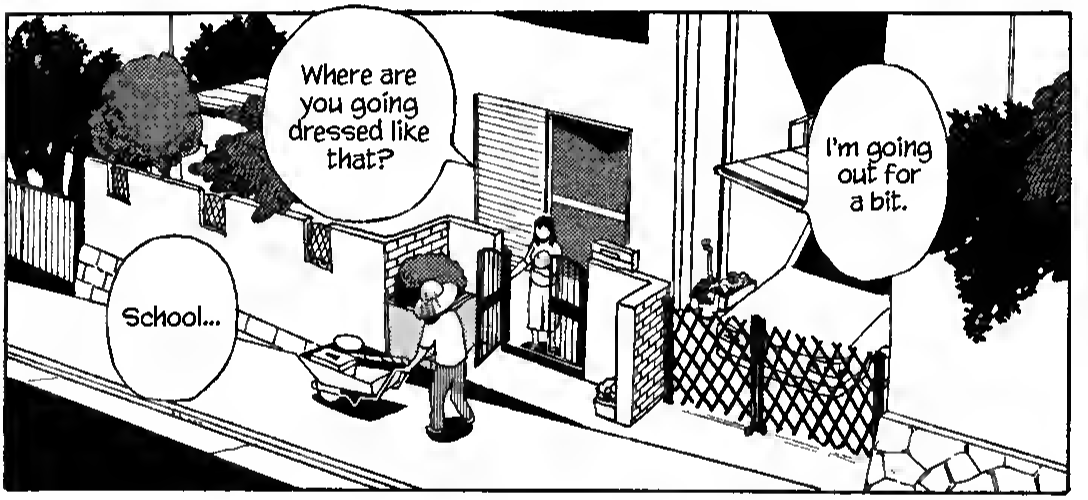
Additionally, in situations where the persons under question claim that it was an accident, they will not be charged with any crime at all.

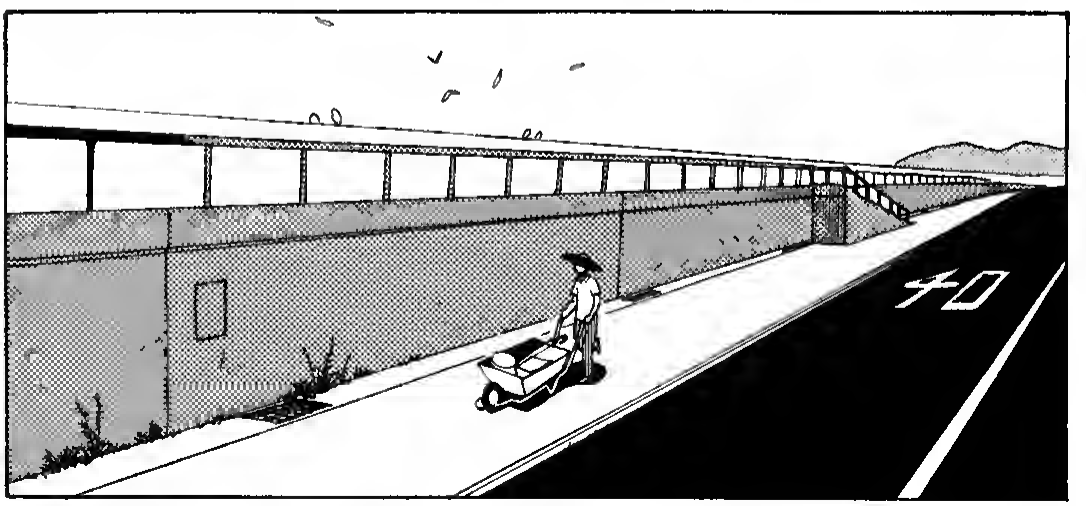
According to current law, even if you kill a mermaid, it will not be considered a crime of murder.

MURDERER
I see. That's what happened with Hama-kun's father.
He caused a mermaid to die accidentally or something...


What's all this ruckus about on a Sunday morning...?
He better be studying for entrance exams.


THUNK


Where are you going dressed like that?
I'm going out for a bit.
School...



squeak
Soooo, you're gonna ride in this,
you
ride
car
school
mountain
and I'll take you up the mountain.
!
Do you get it?
shuffle shuffle
No Littering
Why is she putting the shirt on...?
Though I guess it'll be good so she doesn't get sunburnt.

Whee
splash
Take this.
sploosh
Lone Wolf and Cub

Ice Packs
School's not really all too interesting.
Let's take a break...
VROOM
Should be easy on the way back.
Gah, we're here.
Plink

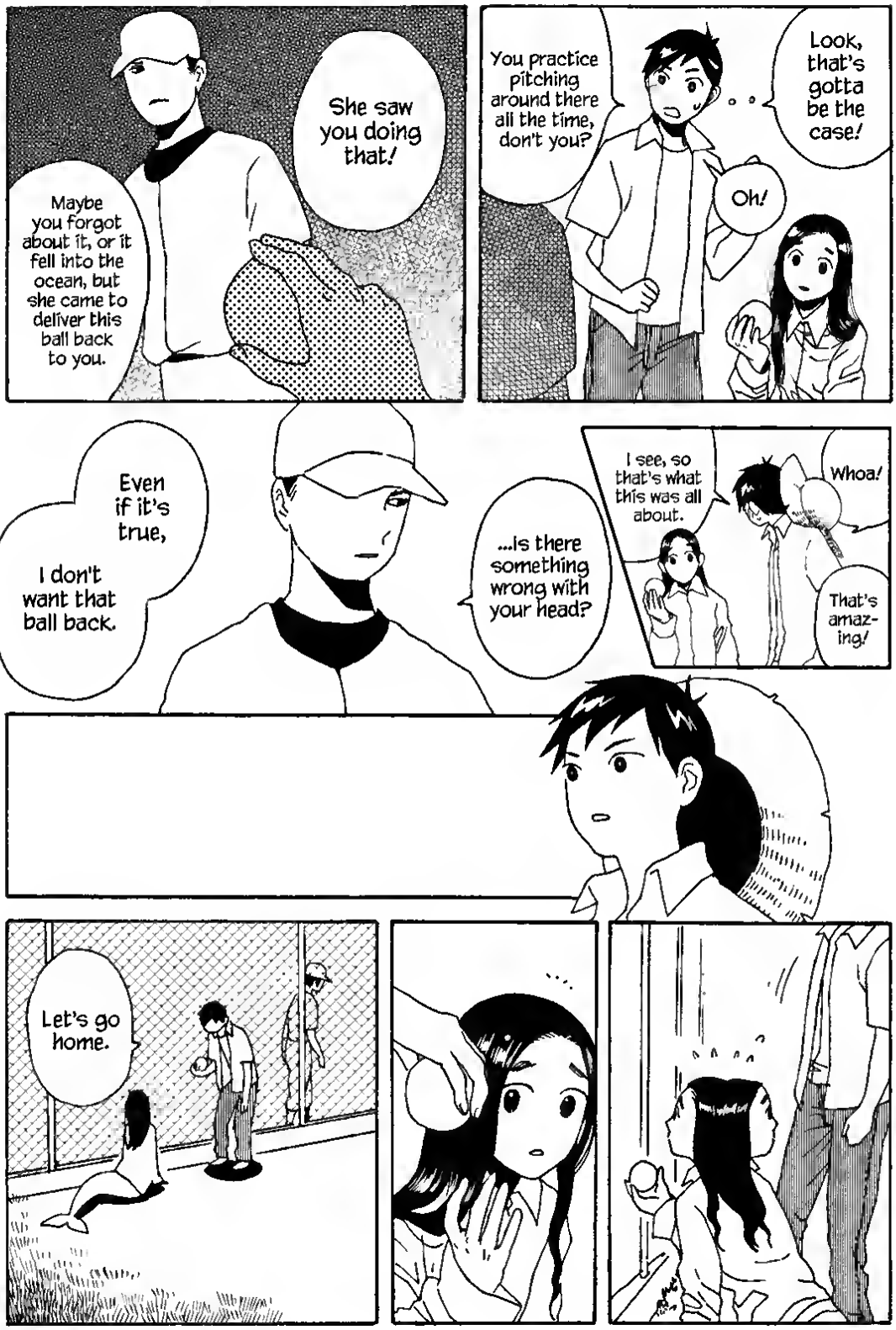
Huh!?
You want to go inside?
RATTLE RATTLE
Okay, just for a bit...
Guess people still got it tough with club activities even on the weekends.
giggle

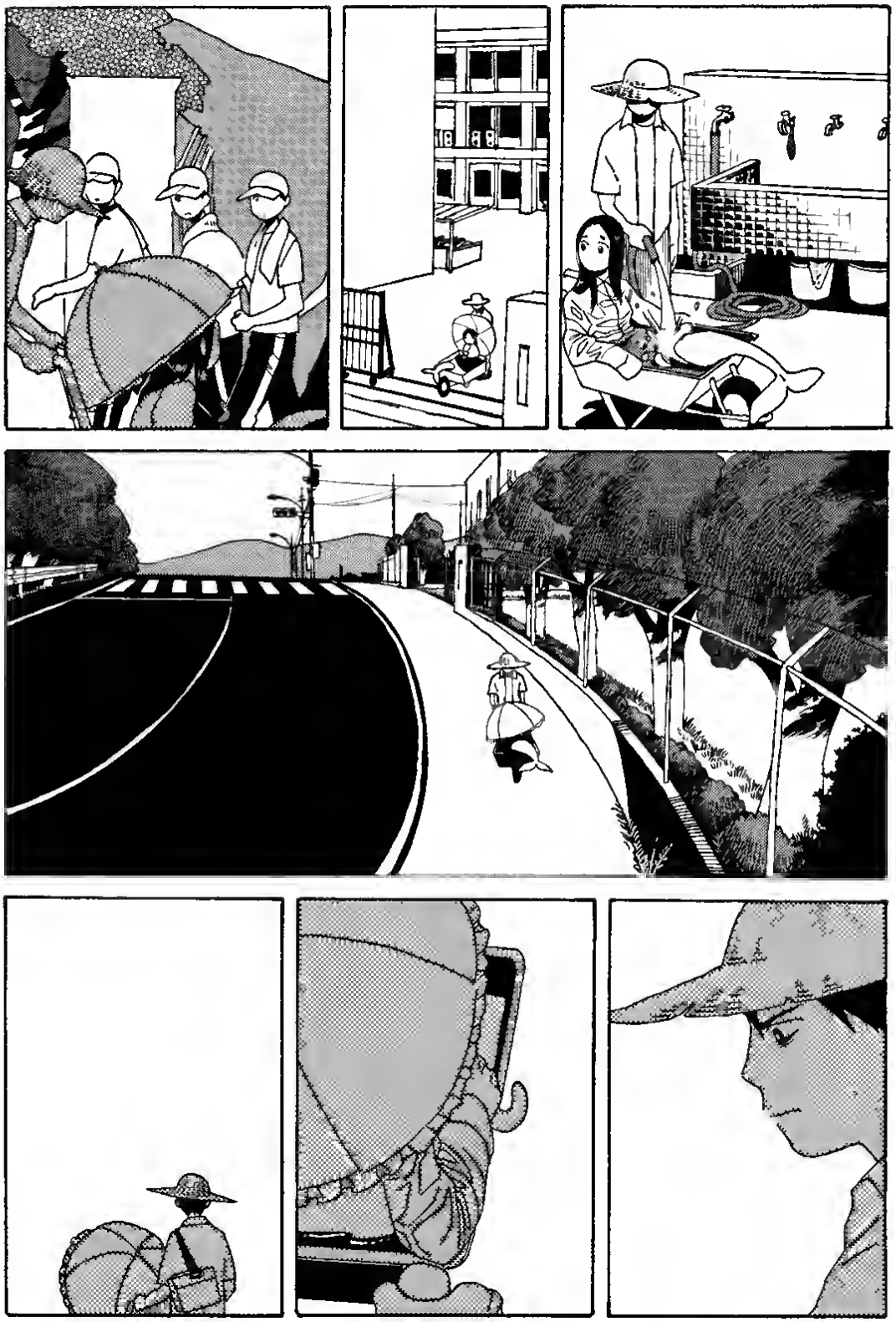
You interested in baseball?
Hm?
Squeak
splash
...
Thanks.
plunk
Urk!
fwap
It's hot.
gasp
glup
glup

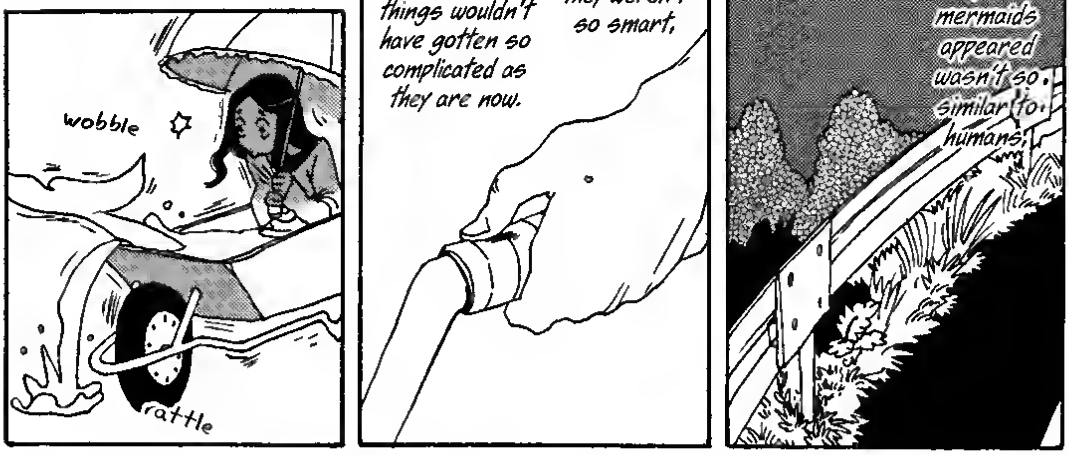
Ice Pack
Ice Pack
Ice Pack
!
sploosh
Jun.
Hmm.
Hama-kun!
What do you think you're doing?
Well...
She seemed like she was going to try to cross the road no matter how many times I warned her about it,
I figured that she'd be satisfied if I brought her here once.
I told you to leave her alone, didn't I?
You may have said that,
but I would lose sleep over it, if a mermaid ended up dead on the road to our school.
It must be fun to do things to satisfy your own desires without thinking about the consequences.

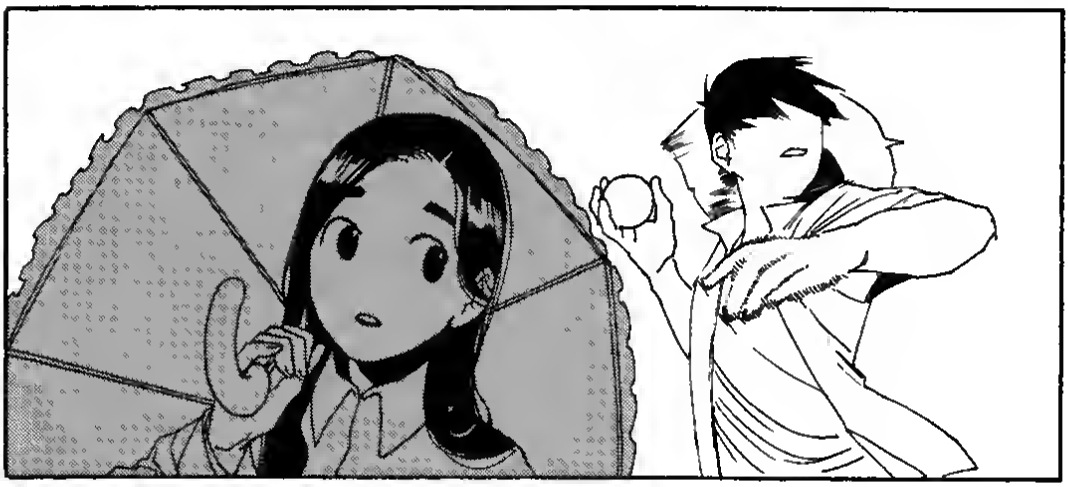
are you gonna come tumbling in every time to protect them?
when they start appearing near human habitats over and over,
You do that, you start feeding them,
then when they stop being scared of humans,
It's ridiculous, all that crap about how they should have human rights and such...
You'd be the type to do something like join one of those weird conservation groups.
but we shouldn't be blurring the boundaries.
They look sort of like humans on the outside so that gets people strangely attached to them,
Does it really get through to them?
What we say gets through to them?
...They look *exactly* like us and what we say gets through to them.
If we were to cause harm or trouble to people like that, it would be normal to want to help them.

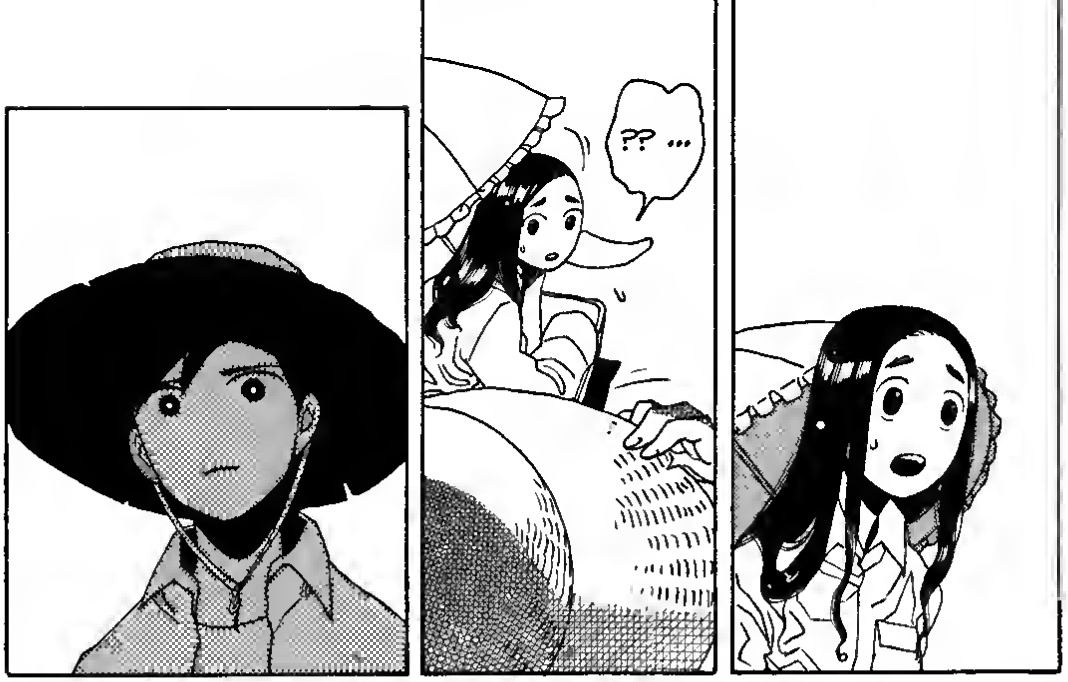
Then how about you talk to them or whatever, and get them to understand the concepts of laws and ethics?
sploosh
Do that and...
ding
Hey... what are you doing?
rummage
...A baseball?
...
Hama-kun, this mermaid knows who you are.

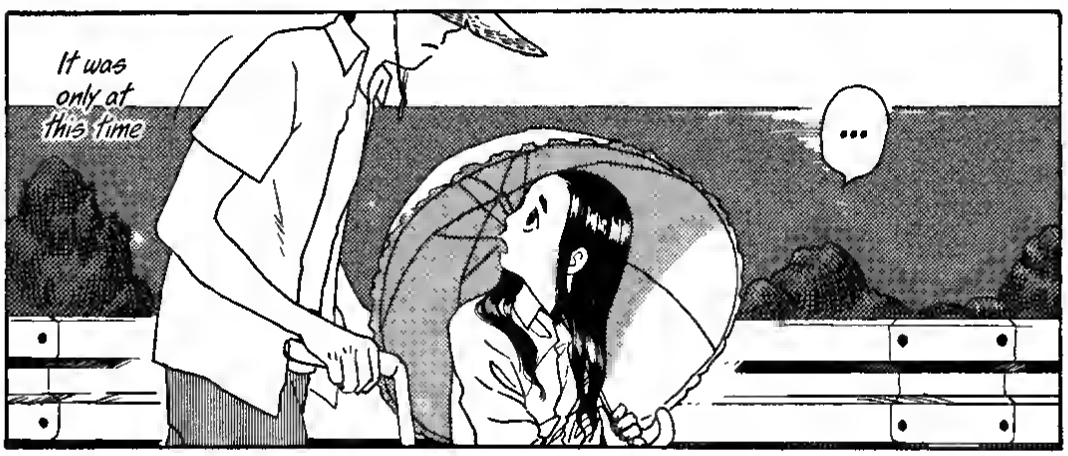

She saw you doing that!
Maybe you forgot about it, or it fell into the ocean, but she came to deliver this ball back to you.
You practice pitching around there all the time, don't you?
Look, that's gotta be the case!
Oh!
Even if it's true,
I don't want that ball back.
...Is there something wrong with your head?
I see, so that's what this was all about.
Whoa!
That's amaz-ing!
Let's go home.

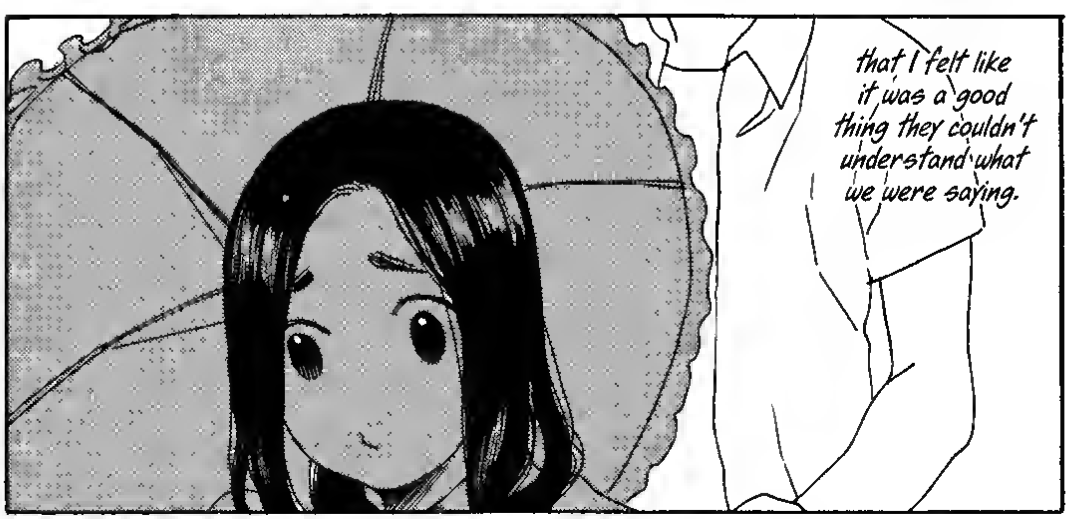


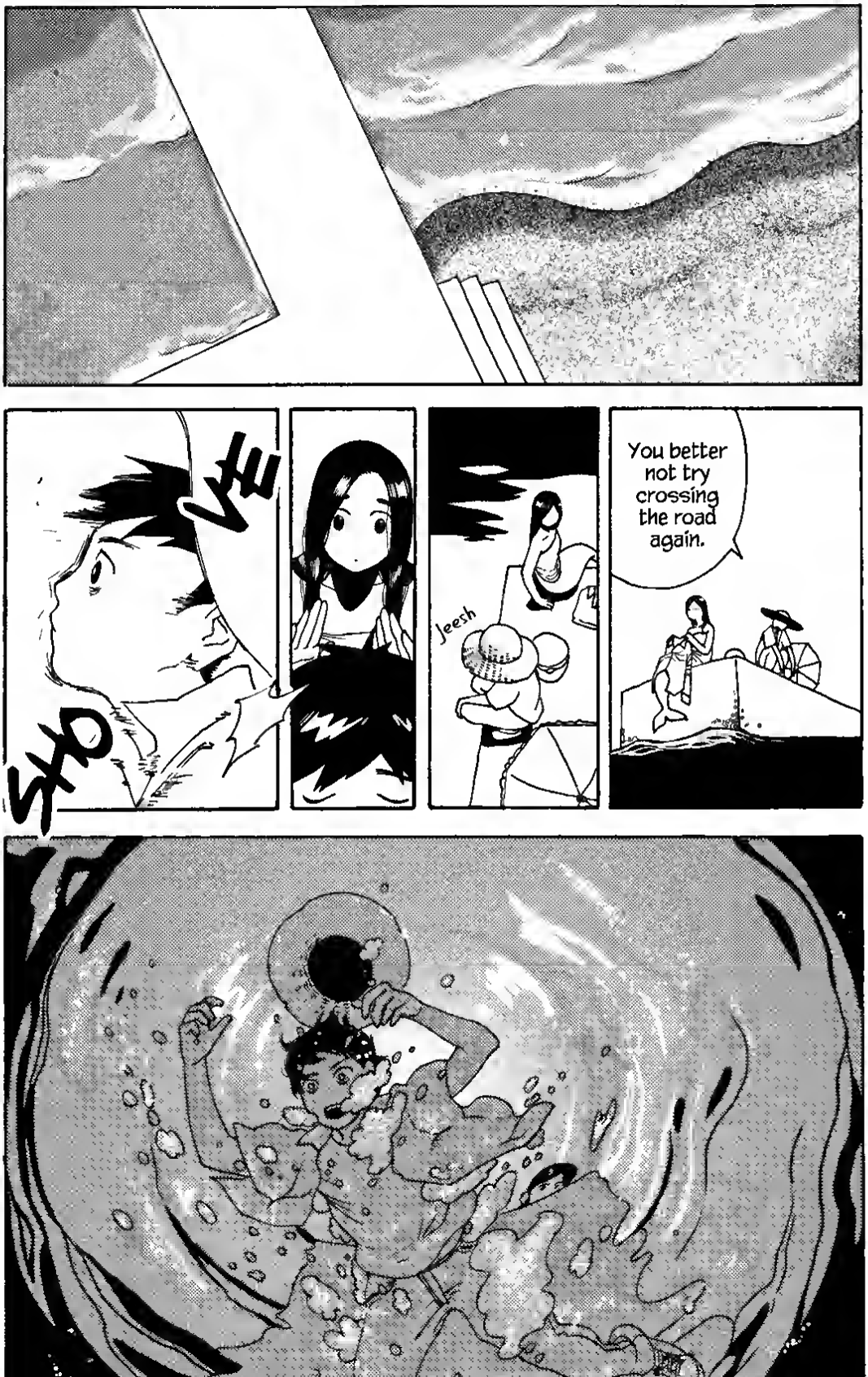

wobble
rattle
then maybe things wouldn't have gotten so complicated as they are now.
or if they weren't so smart.
If the way the mermaids appeared wasn't so similar to humans.



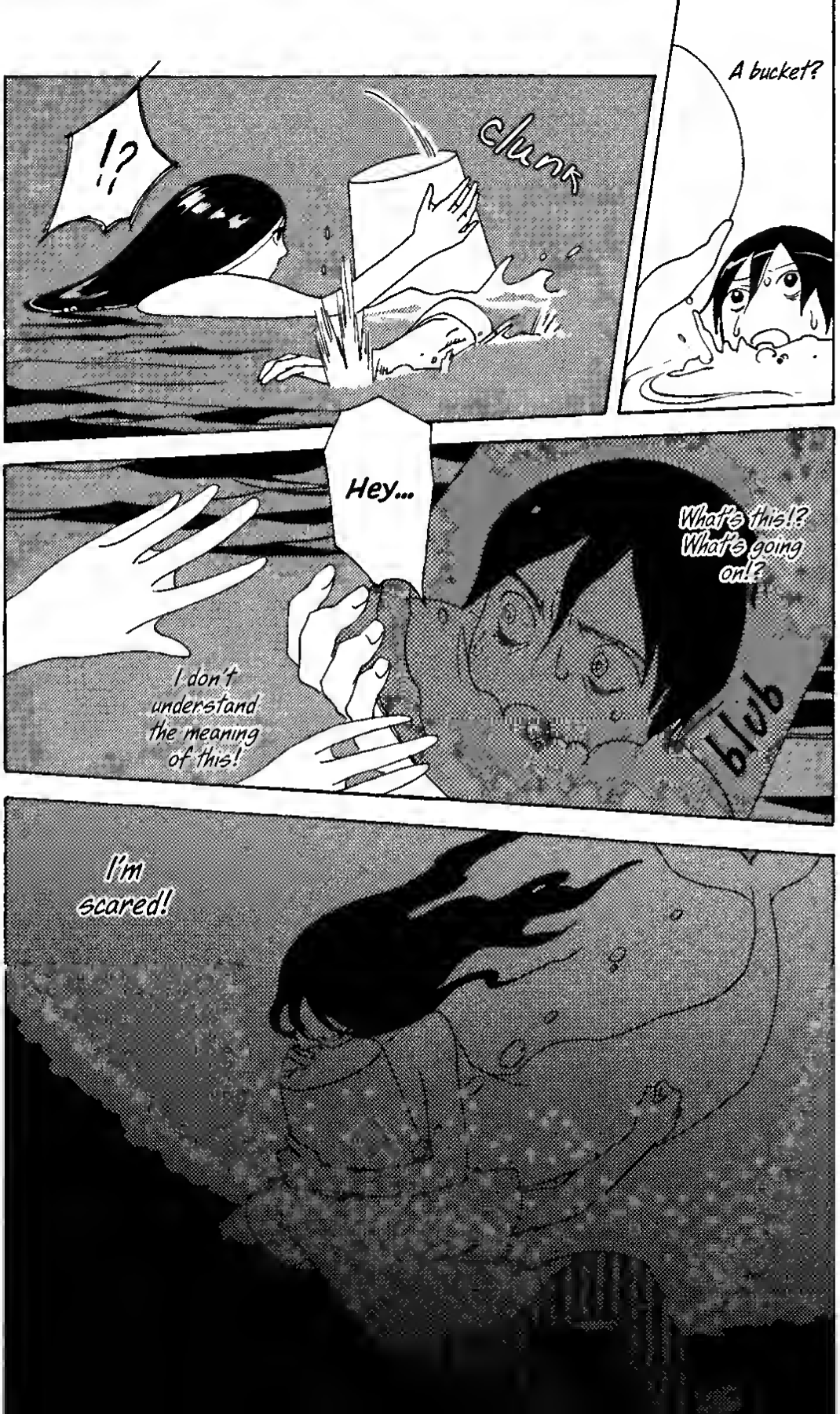

??...


It was only at this time
...


that I felt like it was a good thing they couldn't understand what we were saying.

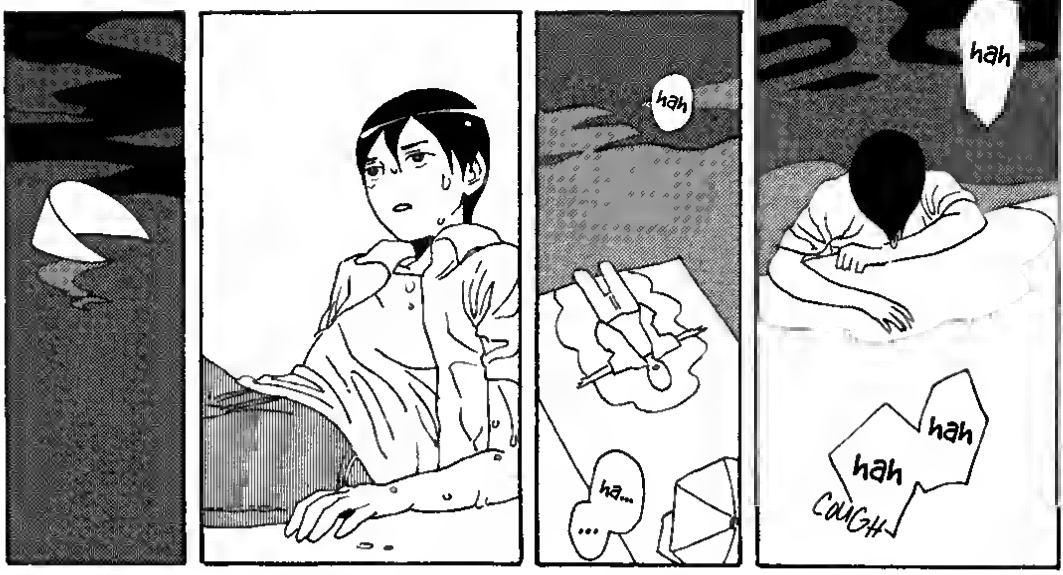

SHOVE
Jeesh
You better not try crossing the road again.

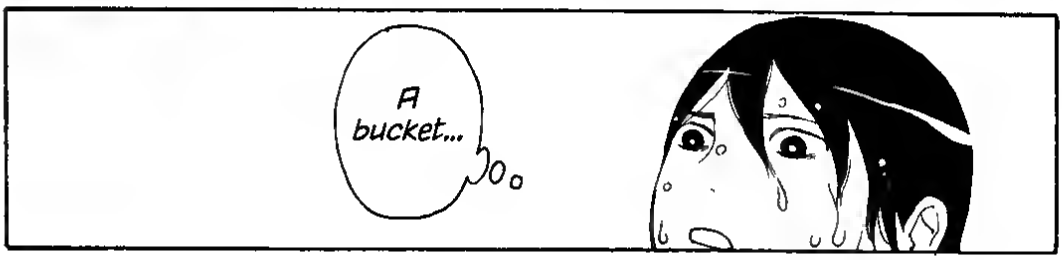
Huh...?
ぎしぎし
HA
HA
HAA
SPLASH
flub
Huh?
What's with you...?
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP

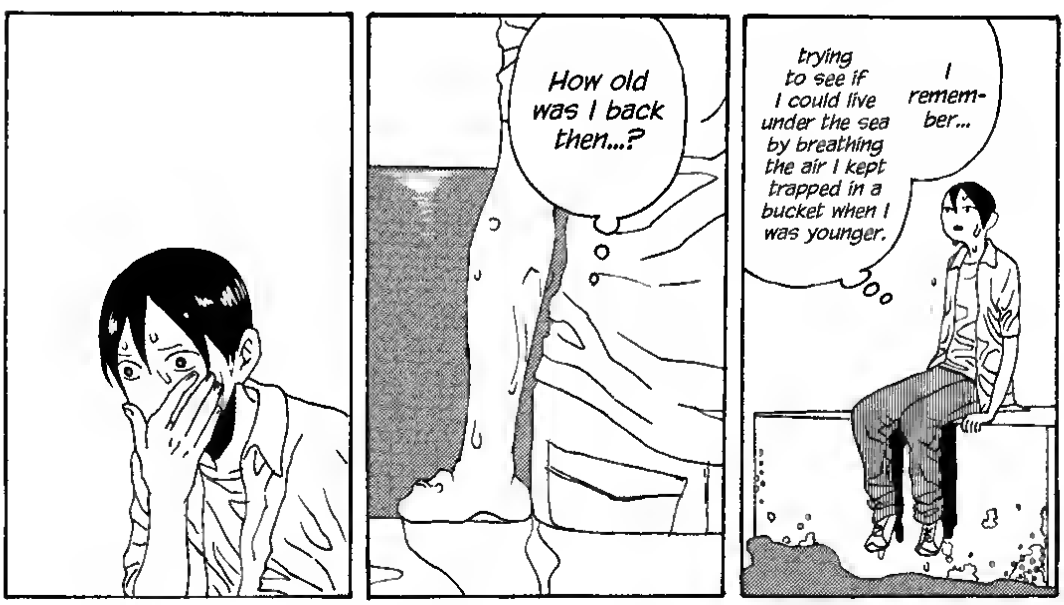

A bucket?
!?
clunk
Hey...
What's this!? What's going on!?
I don't understand the meaning of this!
blub
I'm scared!

She's dragging me down!
SHOVE

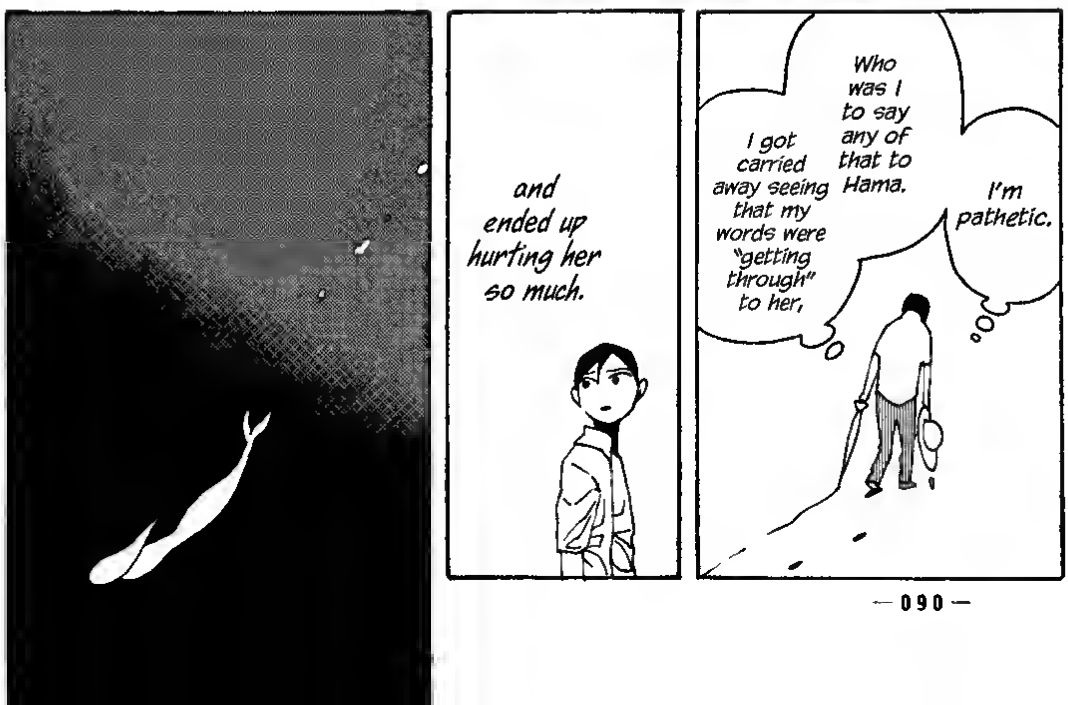
SPL
OOSH


hah
hah
ha...
...
hah
hah
COUGH!


A bucket...


How old was I back then...?
trying to see if I could live under the sea by breathing the air I kept trapped in a bucket when I was younger.
I remember...

she must have meant to do the same and show me around the ocean floor.
Maybe she would've taken me to the palace of the dragon king.
I had filled the wheelbarrow with seawater and carried her to the school
...I thought she was trying to kill me for a moment there...


and ended up hurting her so much.
I got carried away seeing that my words were "getting through" to her.
Who was I to say any of that to Hama.
I'm pathetic.

Staff Room
Oh.
stumble
I-If you're looking for the homeroom teacher, he's busy right now.
...
...Oh!
That's great! Congratulations!
I'm going to live there and work for them starting next year.
I got a job at a workshop.
What did you need to see him for?
W-
...
...I sort of found something I wanted to do.
Well, you know.
But you kept going on about how you didn't want to go anywhere far from home.
Huh?
I changed the school that I was looking to get into.
Thanks.
What about you?
Huh?
Oh...

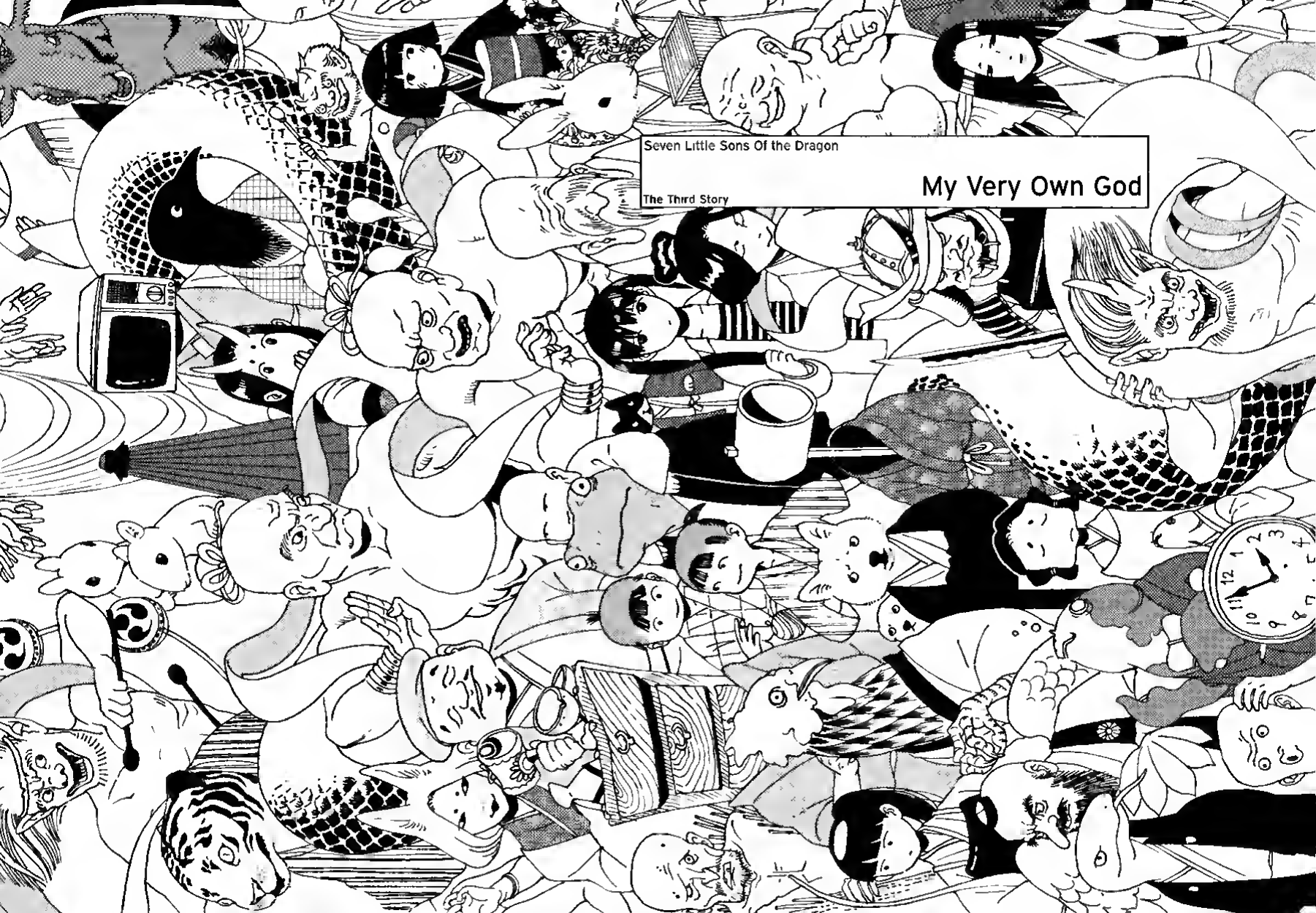
I know what you said to me back then,
but I was thinking... that by coming to understand them we may find ourselves able to draw boundary lines that are correct without worry,
It's marine research.
and we'd reach a position that would be best for all of us.
Though maybe it's naive...?
I'll be rooting for you.

Seven Little Sons Of the Dragon

The Third Story

My Very Own God

during this period of your life right now will be very important.
Listen up, whether you try hard
Your futures will be decided by whether you try hard right now.
That decision will invariably influence your futures.
7/6 (Wed) Mock Exams
Anybody can get into a middle school, but you all have chosen the thorny path of examinations.
...
And those of you who didn't score well should use that to push yourself to work harder.
Those who have gotten good scores on the mock exams should make sure they don't get over-confident.

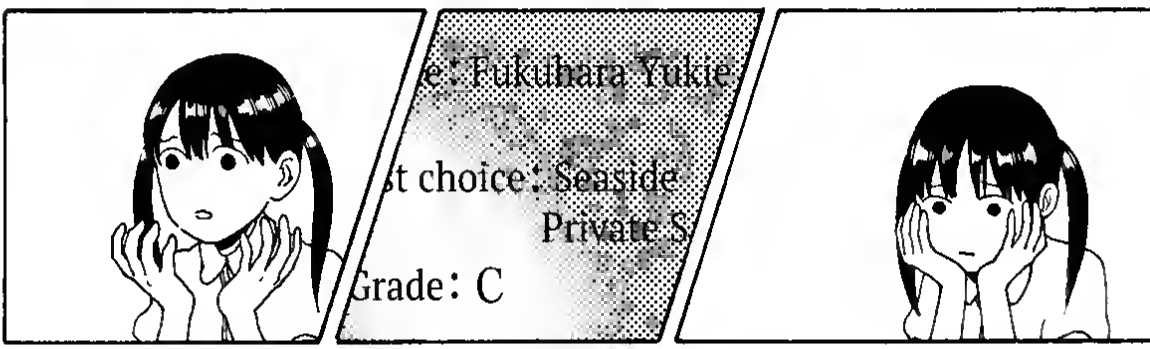

Seven Little Sons Of the Dragon
The Third Story
My Very Own God

DASH
?
BA DUMP
Oh!
Yukie-chan, are you done with cram school?
Under Construction
92sp
92sp

Animals of the Sea
...
Excuse me,
little lady...
Animals of the Sea
SHOCK
Puffer Fish Family

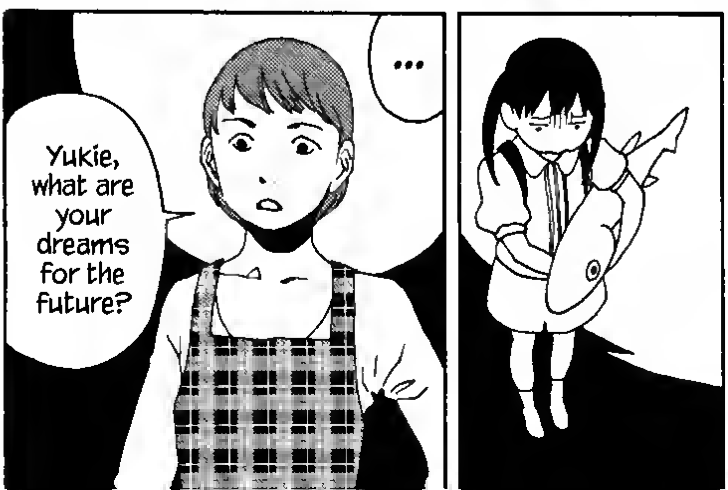
but wasn't there a small stream that used to be around here...?
This may be a bit of a strange question,
Ah!
TURN
I thought that she'd be able to see me since she's a child...
Oh no.
What a bother.
Ah...
DASH
I see...
That river's been buried already...

What should I do?
Lately the river's been getting unusually muddy, making it hard to breathe.
I decided to leave for a bit to get a breath of fresh air, but now I can't get back home.
Apologies for not saying so earlier,
I'm the God of these hills and dales...
Was that river your home?
Yes.


e: Fukuhara Yukie
st choice: Seaside
Private S
Grade: C

What about your mock examination? How did you do?
Are you planning on keeping something again?
Rhino beetles?

Welcome back, Yukie.
Mom, where did we put the rhino beetle cage?
Pant
Pant


Yukie, what are your dreams for the future?
...

You said that you wanted to study a lot, get into a good school,
do research at a lab provided by a top institution, and become known as the number one oceanographer in the world while getting married to a big Hollywood star, right?
That's a surprisingly overly ambitious dream.
All right, fine.
Just make sure you don't regret it.
FWOOSH
Oh, please don't worry about it...
I just wasn't ready to get soaked...
But next time if you can, please use non-chlorinated water.
Whoops.
FLOP
Splash

DONG
DING
DONG
huff
huff

blub...
blub...
But, Yukie,
water will get dirty if you leave it out.
New Years Money
Phew

Then...
I'm just going to disappear like the hill did.
But,
I'm no longer a God of anything now that the hill is gone.
Oh, so that's what this is about...
There's no way I'll be of any help to you...
Clap
Clap
Please let me pass my exams.
Pray
Pray
Ah!
Yukie, dinner!
What's wrong?
You don't look too good today.
If I...
fail my tests, what's gonna happen?
If that happens then you'll just go to a public middle school.
That's not what I mean...
?

Yukie, don't leave any grains of rice. Eat it all.
Don't you know that every grain of rice has seven to eighty eight gods on it?
If you leave any of them you'll be punished.
...What happens to the gods that get eaten and the ones that are left behind?
whee
whee
whee
Just finish your dinner.
Do you want to eat some rice balls?
...
Okay...
Urghhh
Blegh
...
Thank you...

⑤
温
おん
⑥
弱
じゃく
内
知
新
ちしん
きょうしょく
[エ]
[ ]
Ahhh...!
NOOOOOO!
What's wrong, Yukie?
The fish... has gotten so weak...
The rice fish?
Help, Daddy!
At this rate, he's going to disappear!

Where are you going?
To the shop...
It'll be okay, it'll be okay.
If we take good care of them, they'll be fine.
Wow, there's so much stuff here...
I don't know what's what =
Regulating agents, filters, and gravel?
I wonder if we need some plants as well.
Let's just buy the one that says it's for rice fish.
Let's just try them all out.
This is a kind of studying too.
...But what if I study...
and it still doesn't go well?
Huh?

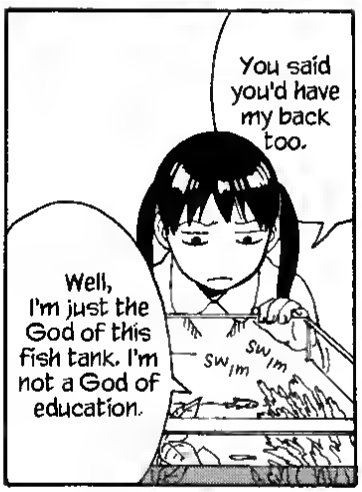
Are you having a tough time with your exams?
I'm scared of what'll happen if I don't do well...
No...
Yukie...
SOB
SOB
If I study and I still fail then won't it all be a waste?
Yukie...
If it all goes badly, will I still be able to stay who I am?
I'm worried that I'll just end up disappearing like the fish and the hill in the back.
The hill in the back...? Where they're doing construction?
I know,
why don't you go take a look at where the hill in the back was once it gets to winter?
...?

huff
huff

...
An apartment complex...
Did you see it?
Was something there?
Oh!
All sorts of different people,
with all sorts of different lives,
will be there.
The trees and the river may be gone,
but there'll be lots of people moving there now.
See.
No matter what happens with your tests, you'll be a great big sister.
It'll be okay.
Welcome home!
People might have different views about what's better,
but it's not like there's nothing there at all.

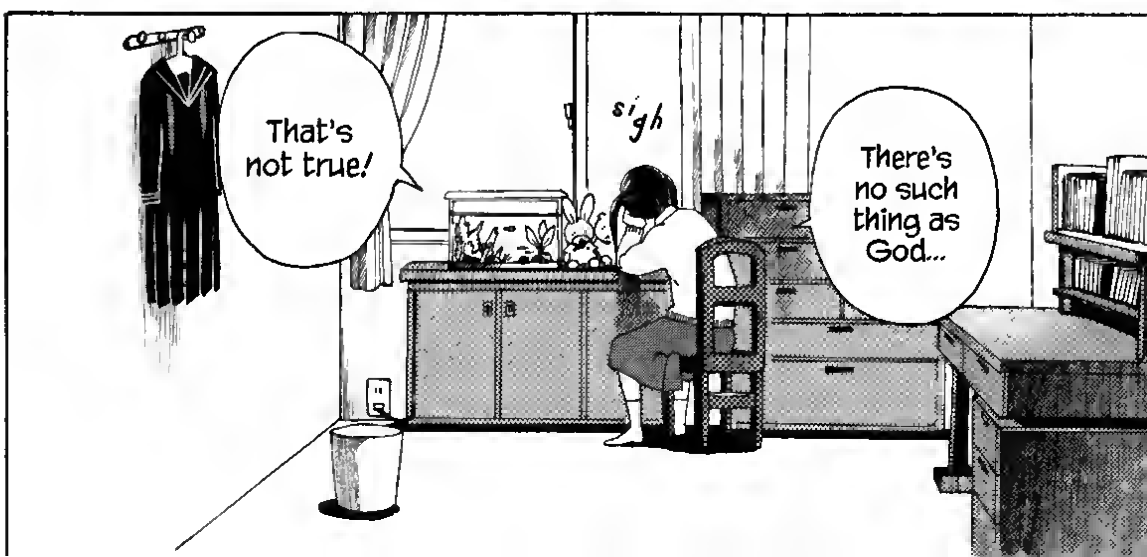
Middle School
?
I don't remember keeping that strange fish...
It's me!
hop
Ahhh!
A world has been created in this fishtank because you've taken such good care of it.
Thank you.
Because of your efforts, I was able to become the God of this fish tank.
Thank God it's still in time for my exams.
I was so worried.
I'll be praying for you to pass.

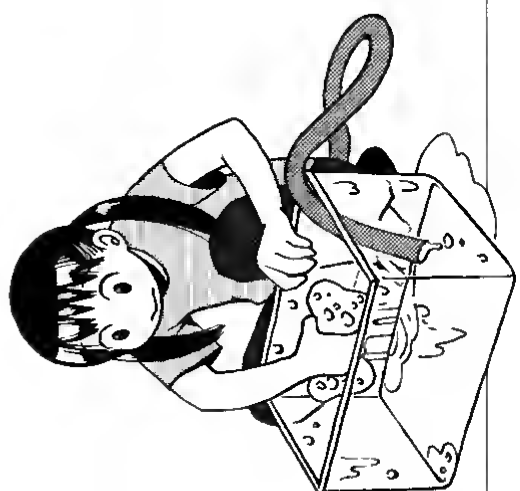
I didn't make it.


You said you'd have my back too.
Well, I'm just the God of this fish tank. I'm not a God of education.
swim
swim

How did it go?
Welcome back.
Awfully...

Well, at least we won't have to pay so much for school.


That's not true!
sigh
There's no such thing as God...



The Third Story ◉ The End

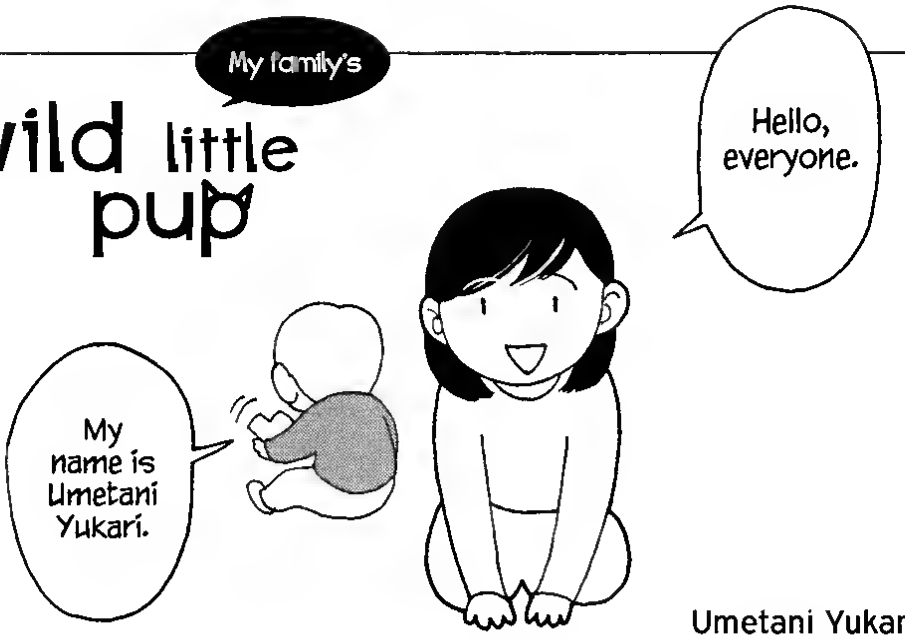
Seven Little Sons Of the Dragon

The Fourth Story

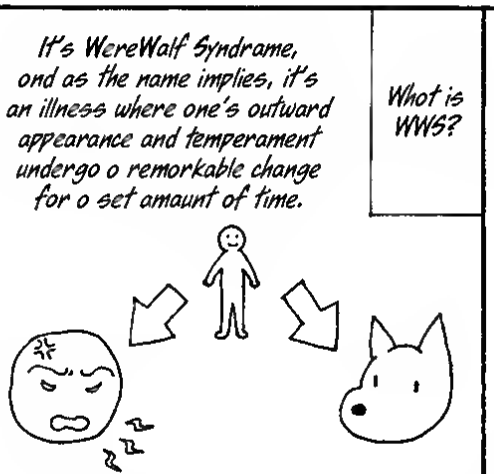
Wolves Tell No Lies

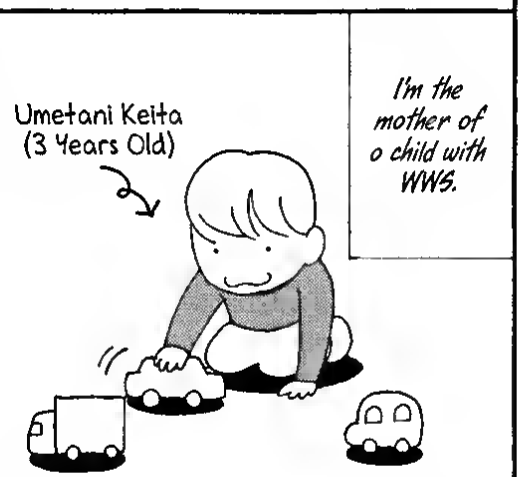
My family's

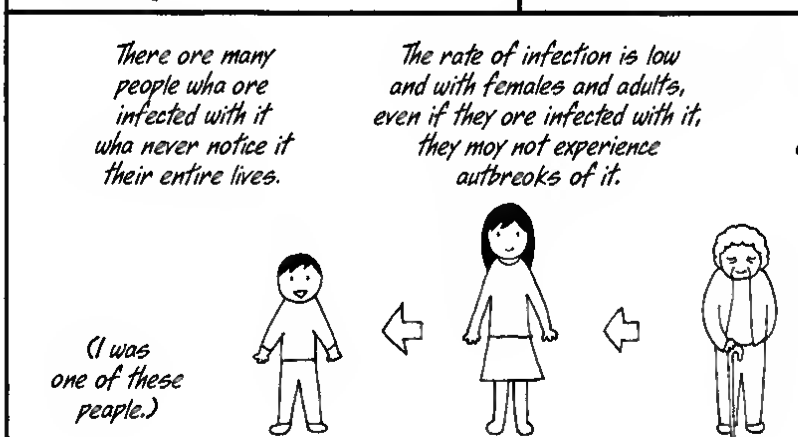
wild little pup

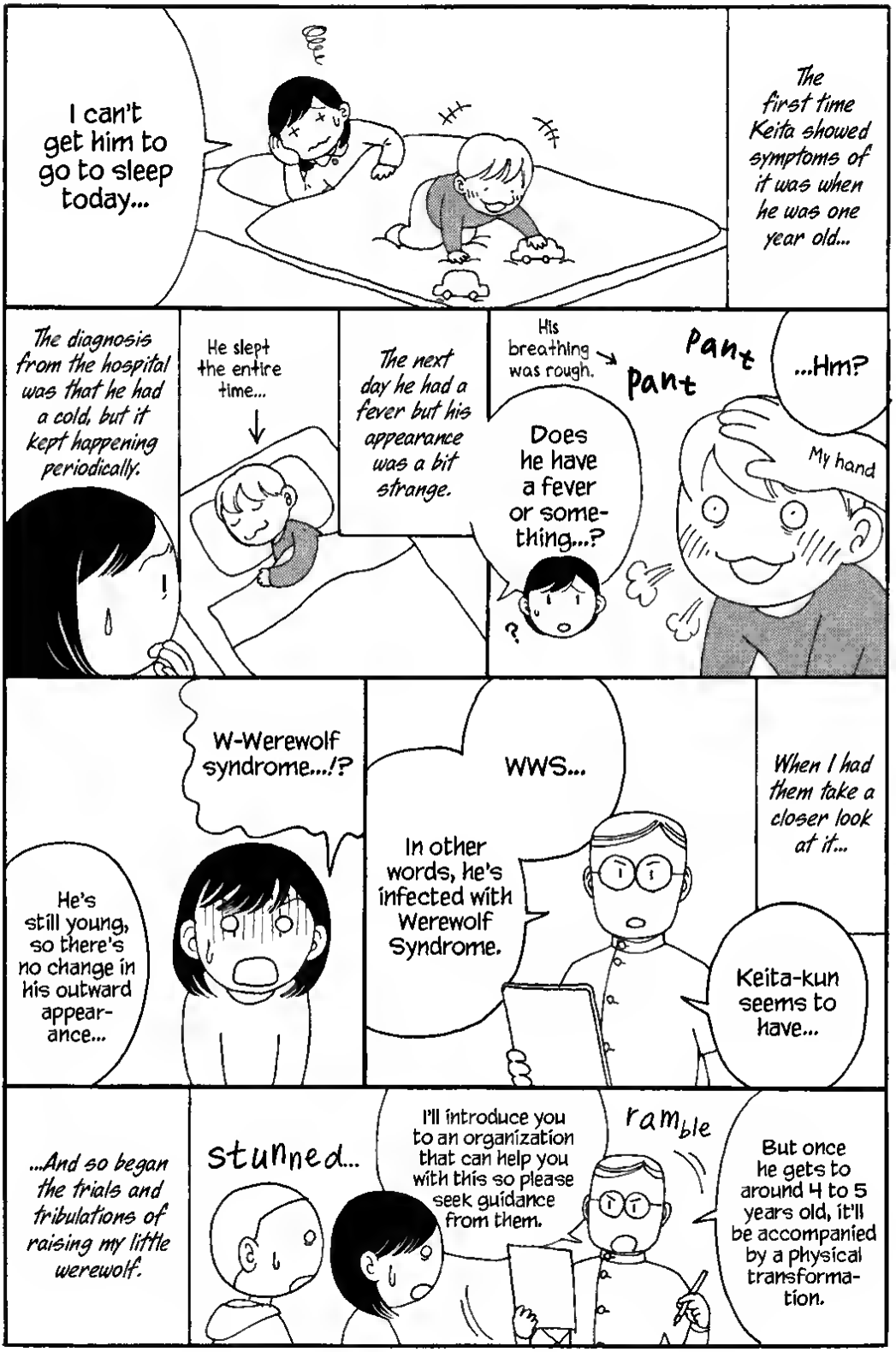


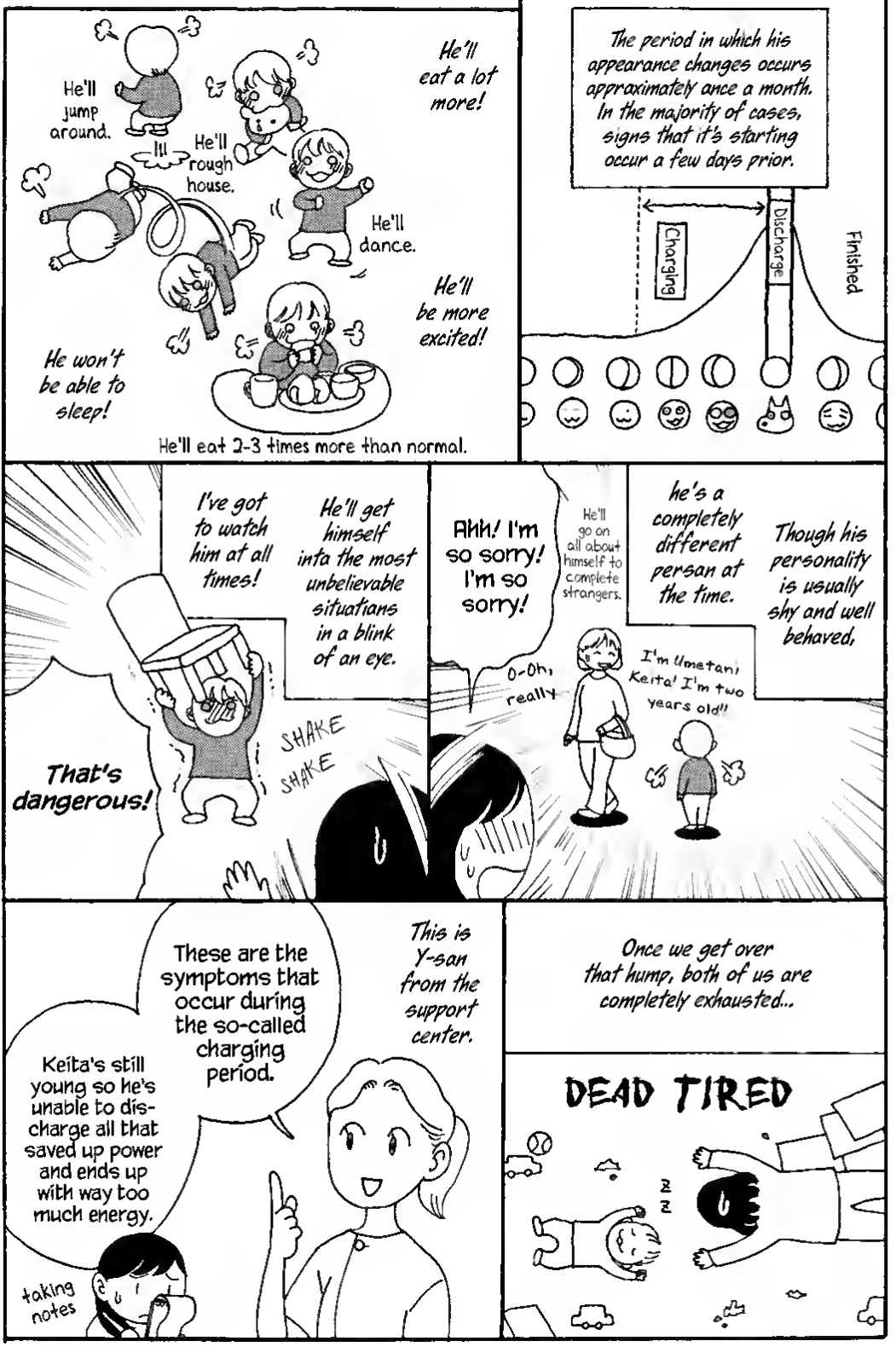
Umetani Yukari

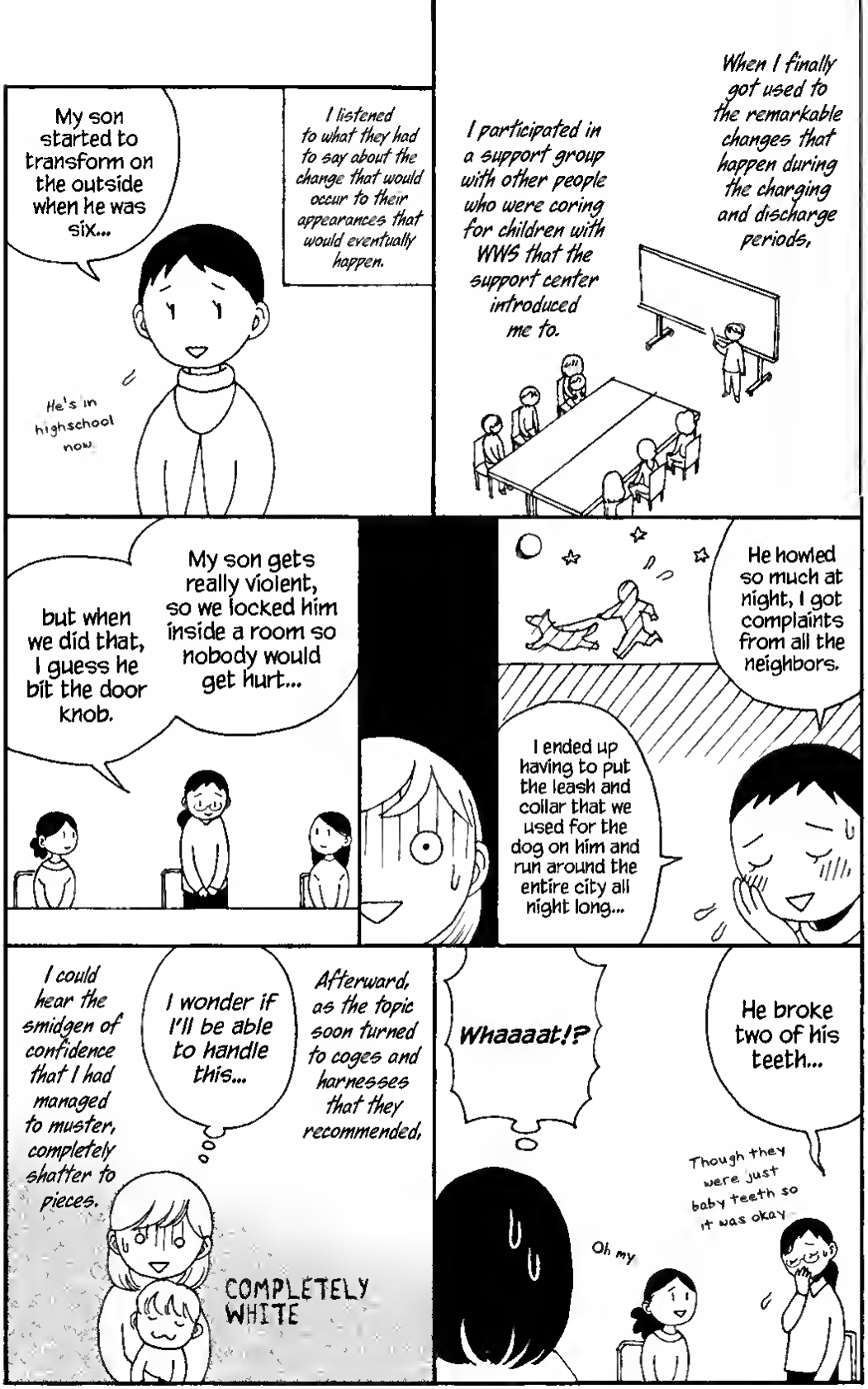

It's WereWolf Syndrome, and as the name implies, it's an illness where one's outward appearance and temperament undergo a remarkable change for a set amount of time.
What is WWS?

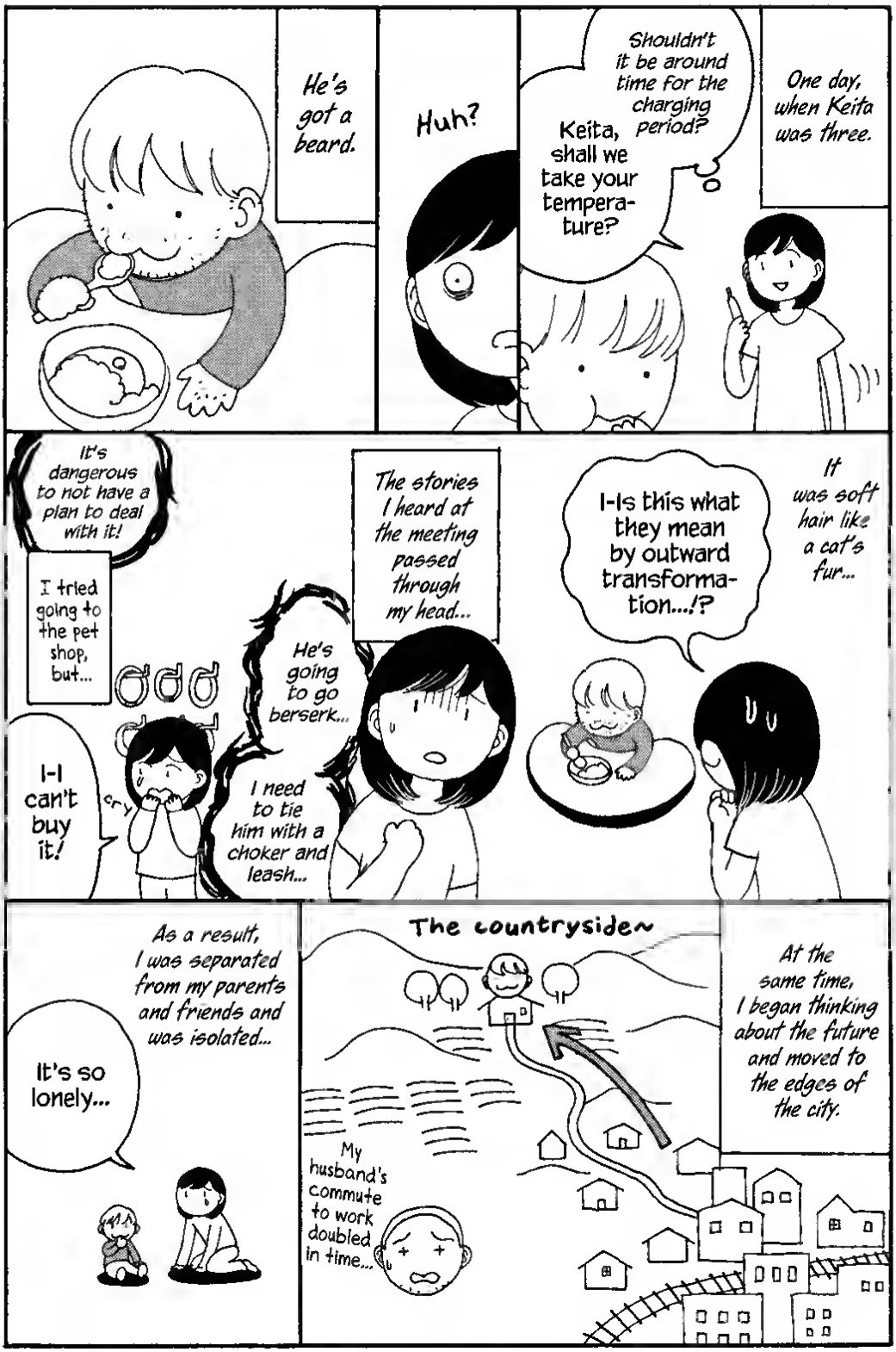


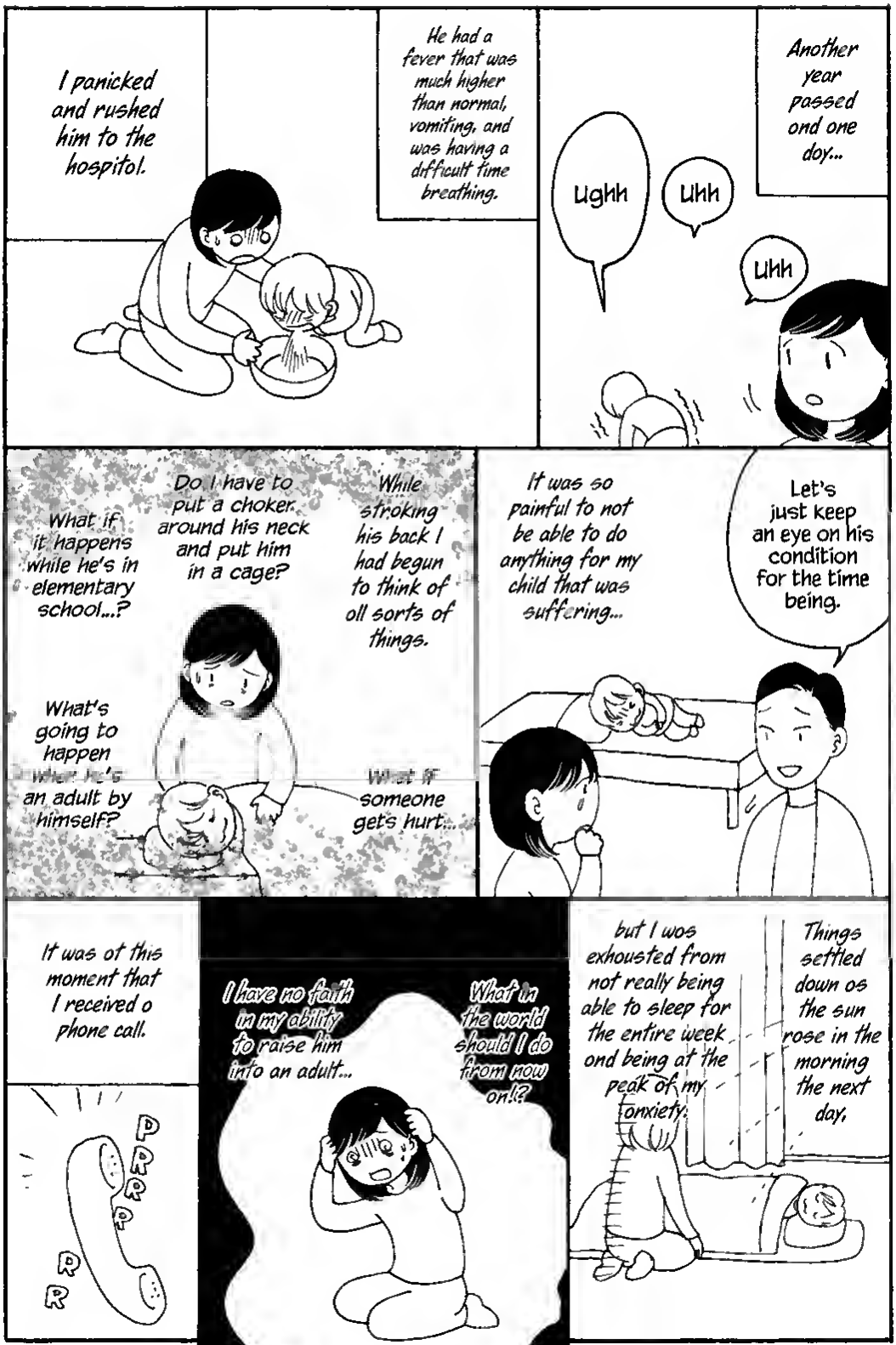

There are many people who are infected with it who never notice it their entire lives.
The rate of infection is low and with females and adults, even if they are infected with it, they may not experience outbreaks of it.
Cases of WWS occur by heredity from the mother or from contagion through blood.
(I was one of these people.)

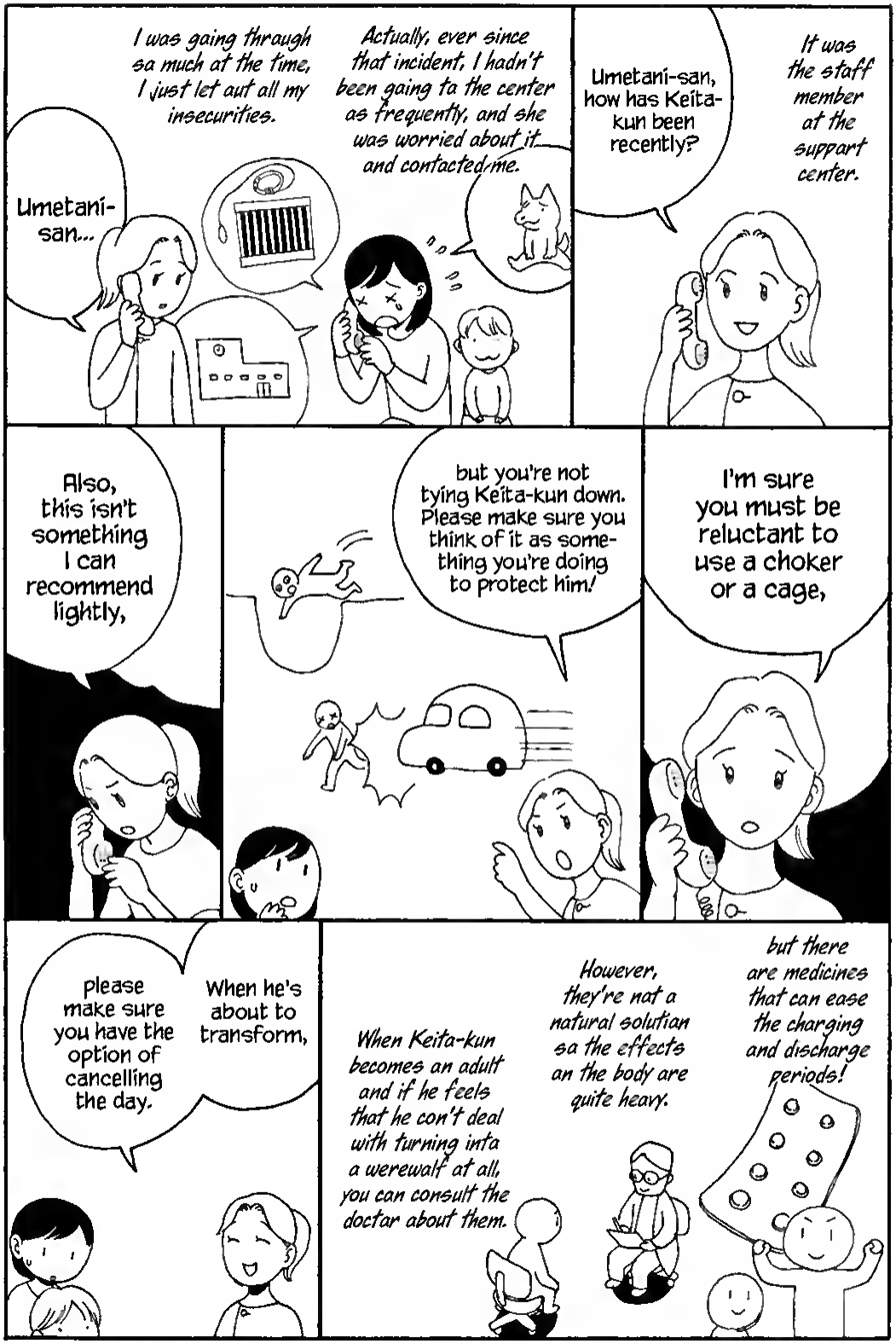

I can't get him to go to sleep today...
The first time Keita showed symptoms of it was when he was one year old...
The diagnosis from the hospital was that he had a cold, but it kept happening periodically.
He slept the entire time...
The next day he had a fever but his appearance was a bit strange.
His breathing was rough.
Pant
Pant
...Hm?
My hand
Does he have a fever or something...?
W-Werewolf syndrome...!?
He's still young, so there's no change in his outward appearance...
WWS...
In other words, he's infected with Werewolf Syndrome.
When I had them take a closer look at it...
Keita-kun seems to have...
...And so began the trials and tribulations of raising my little werewolf.
stunned...
I'll introduce you to an organization that can help you with this so please seek guidance from them.
ramble
But once he gets to around 4 to 5 years old, it'll be accompanied by a physical transformation.

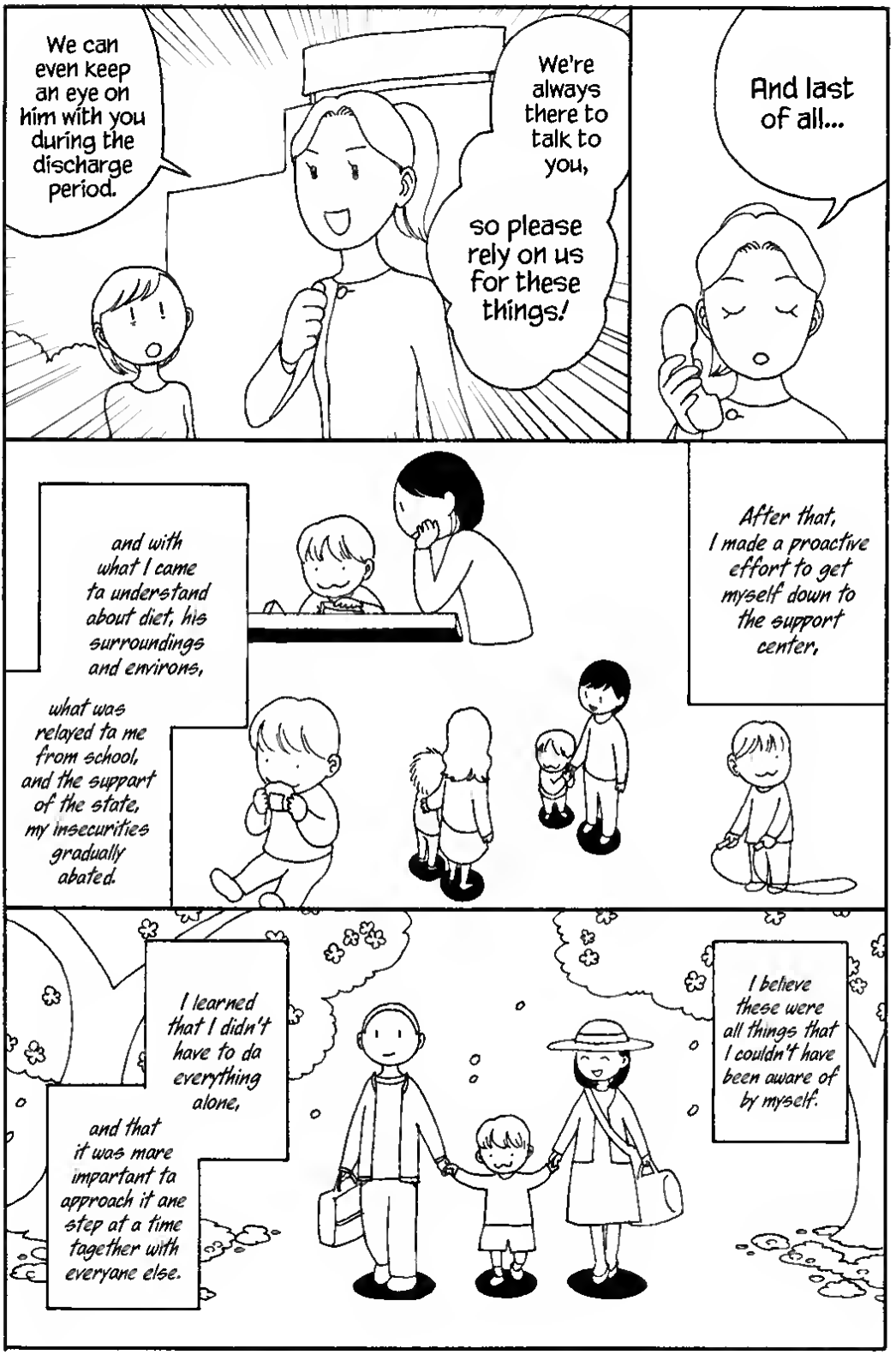

He'll jump around.
He'll rough house.
He'll dance.
He'll eat a lot more!
He'll be more excited!
He won't be able to sleep!
He'll eat 2-3 times more than normal.
The period in which his appearance changes occurs approximately once a month. In the majority of cases, signs that it's starting occur a few days prior.
Charging
Discharge
Finished
I've got to watch him at all times!
He'll get himself into the most unbelievable situations in a blink of an eye.
That's dangerous!
SHAKE SHAKE
Ahh! I'm so sorry! I'm so sorry!
He'll go on all about himself to complete strangers.
O-Oh, really
I'm Umetani Keita! I'm two years old!!
He's a completely different person at the time.
Though his personality is usually shy and well behaved.
This is Y-san from the support center.
These are the symptoms that occur during the so-called charging period.
Keita's still young so he's unable to discharge all that saved up power and ends up with way too much energy.
taking notes
Once we get over that hump, both of us are completely exhausted...
DEAD TIRED
ZZ


My son started to transform on the outside when he was six...
He's in highschool now.
I listened to what they had to say about the change that would occur to their appearances that would eventually happen.
I participated in a support group with other people who were coring for children with WWS that the support center introduced me to.
When I finally got used to the remarkable changes that happen during the charging and discharge periods,
My son gets really violent, so we locked him inside a room so nobody would get hurt...
but when we did that, I guess he bit the door knob.
He howled so much at night, I got complaints from all the neighbors.
I ended up having to put the leash and collar that we used for the dog on him and run around the entire city all night long...
I could hear the smidgen of confidence that I had managed to muster, completely shatter to pieces.
I wonder if I'll be able to handle this...
Afterward, as the topic soon turned to coges and harnesses that they recommended,
COMPLETELY WHITE
Whaaaat!?
He broke two of his teeth...
Though they were just baby teeth so it was okay...
Oh my


He's got a beard.
Huh?
Shouldn't it be around time for the charging period?
Keita, shall we take your temperature?
One day, when Keita was three.
It's dangerous to not have a plan to deal with it!
I tried going to the pet shop, but...
I-I can't buy it!
cry
He's going to go berserk...
I need to tie him with a choker and leash...
The stories I heard at the meeting passed through my head...
I-Is this what they mean by outward transformation...!?
It was soft hair like a cat's fur...
As a result, I was separated from my parents and friends and was isolated...
It's so lonely...
The countryside~
My husband's commute to work doubled in time...
At the same time, I began thinking about the future and moved to the edges of the city.

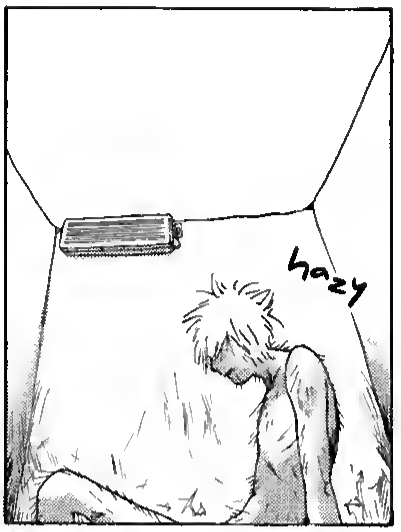

I panicked and rushed him to the hospital.
He had a fever that was much higher than normal, vomiting, and was having a difficult time breathing.
Another year passed and one day...
Ughh
Uhh
Uhh
What if it happens while he's in elementary school...?
Do I have to put a choker around his neck and put him in a cage?
While stroking his back I had begun to think of all sorts of things.
What's going to happen when he's an adult by himself?
What if someone gets hurt...
It was so painful to not be able to do anything for my child that was suffering...
Let's just keep an eye on his condition for the time being.
It was at this moment that I received a phone call.
PRRR
I have no faith in my ability to raise him into an adult...
What in the world should I do from now on!?
but I was exhausted from not really being able to sleep for the entire week and being at the peak of my anxiety.
Things settled down as the sun rose in the morning the next day.

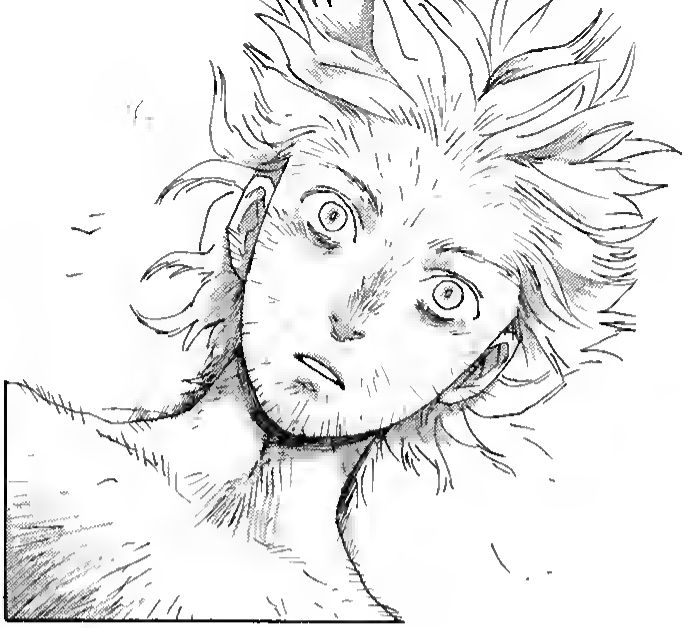

Umetani-san...
I was going through so much at the time, I just let out all my insecurities.
Actually, ever since that incident, I hadn't been going to the center as frequently, and she was worried about it and contacted me.
Umetani-san, how has Keita-kun been recently?
It was the staff member at the support center.
Also, this isn't something I can recommend lightly,
but you're not tying Keita-kun down. Please make sure you think of it as something you're doing to protect him!
I'm sure you must be reluctant to use a choker or a cage,
When he's about to transform,
please make sure you have the option of cancelling the day.
When Keita-kun becomes an adult and if he feels that he can't deal with turning into a werewolf at all, you can consult the doctor about them.
However, they're not a natural solution so the effects on the body are quite heavy.
but there are medicines that can ease the charging and discharge periods!


We can even keep an eye on him with you during the discharge period.
We're always there to talk to you,
so please rely on us for these things!
And last of all...
and with what I came ta understand about diet, his surroundings and environs,
what was relayed ta me from school, and the suppart of the state, my insecurities gradually abated.
After that, I made a proactive effort to get myself down to the support center,
I learned that I didn't have to da everything alone,
and that it was mare impartant ta approach it ane step at a time tagether with everyane else.
I believe these were all things that I couldn't have been aware of by myself.

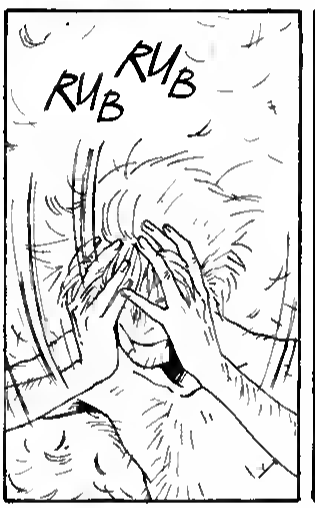
End

Seven Little Sons Of the Dragon
The Fourth Story
Wolves Tell No Lies

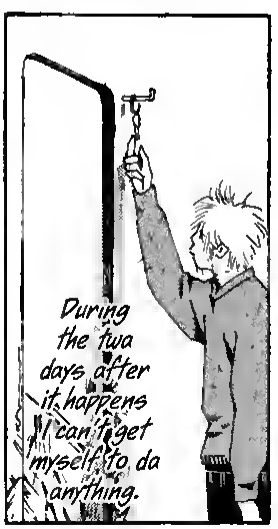

hazy



ugh

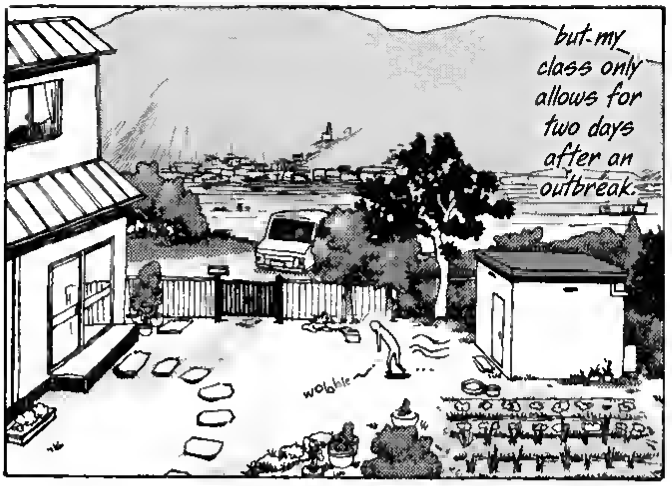

RUB
RUB

...

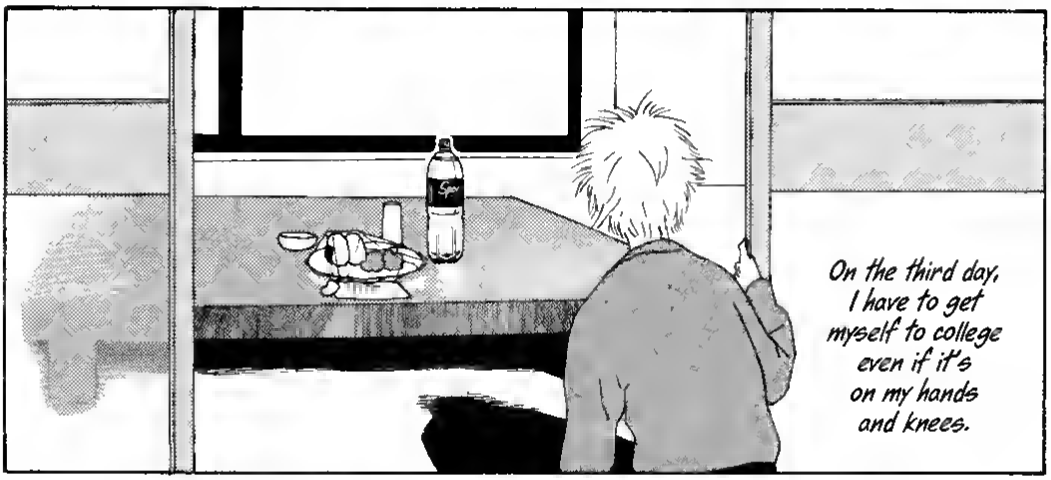

During the two days after it happens I can't get myself to do anything.

I'm drowsy.
I'm nauseous,
my head hurts,
and my stomach is in pain.
flutter
flutter

My muscles hurt and I'm dizzy.
It's such an intense feeling of fatigue.

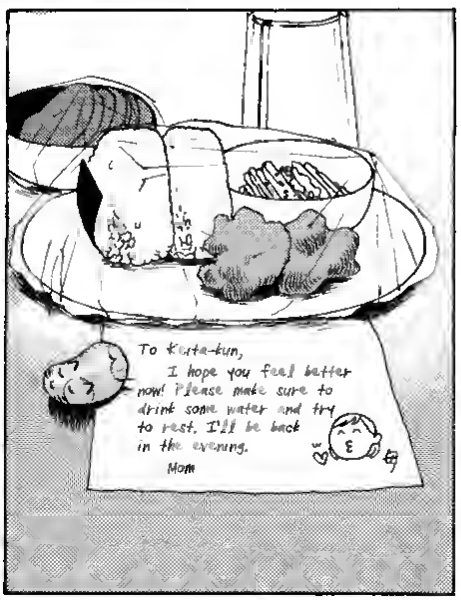

but my class only allows for two days after an outbreak.
wobble

If I could, I'd prefer to stay holed up sleeping for an entire week.
THUNK
KREEEE

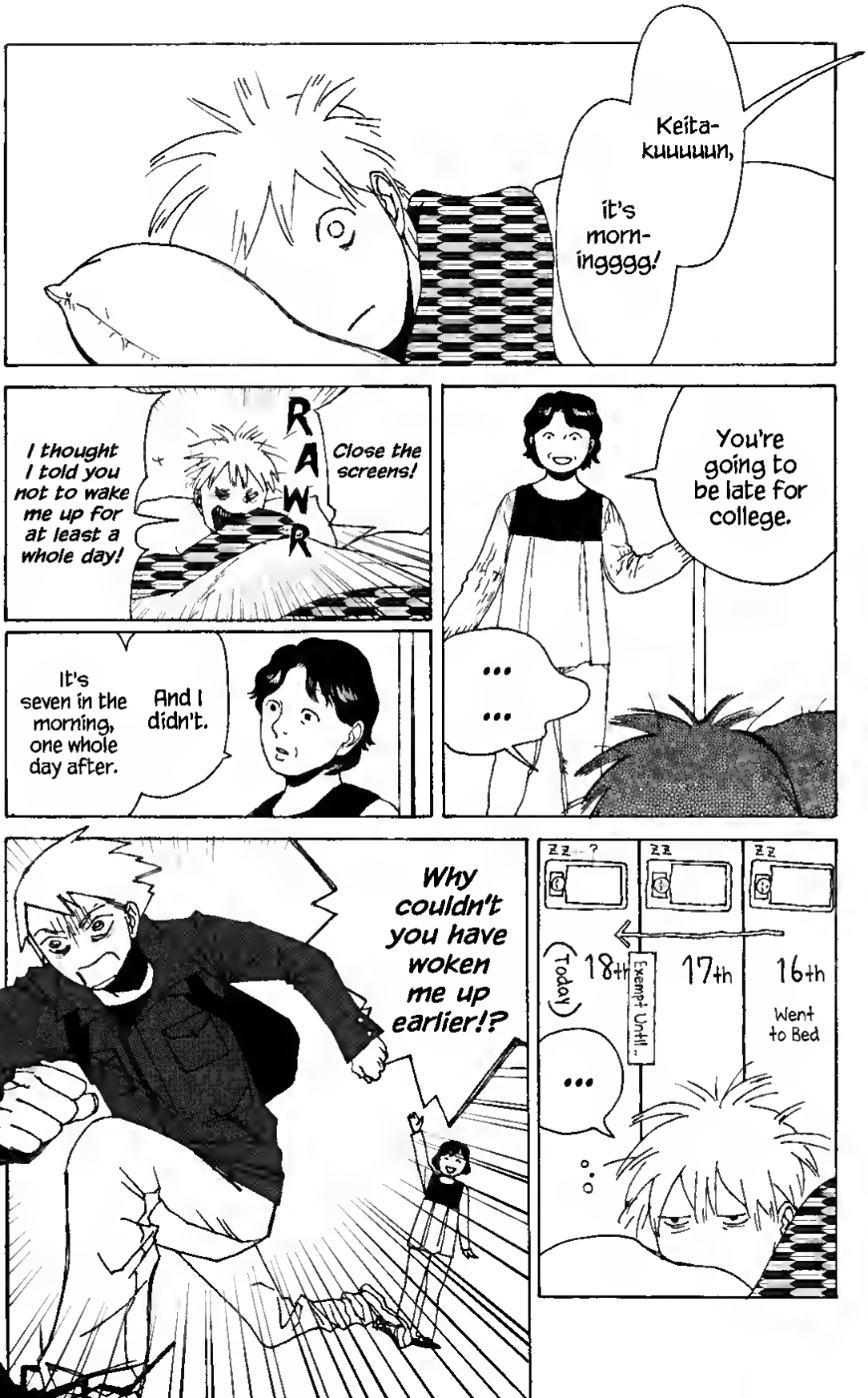

On the third day, I have to get myself to college even if it's on my hands and knees.

Ugh

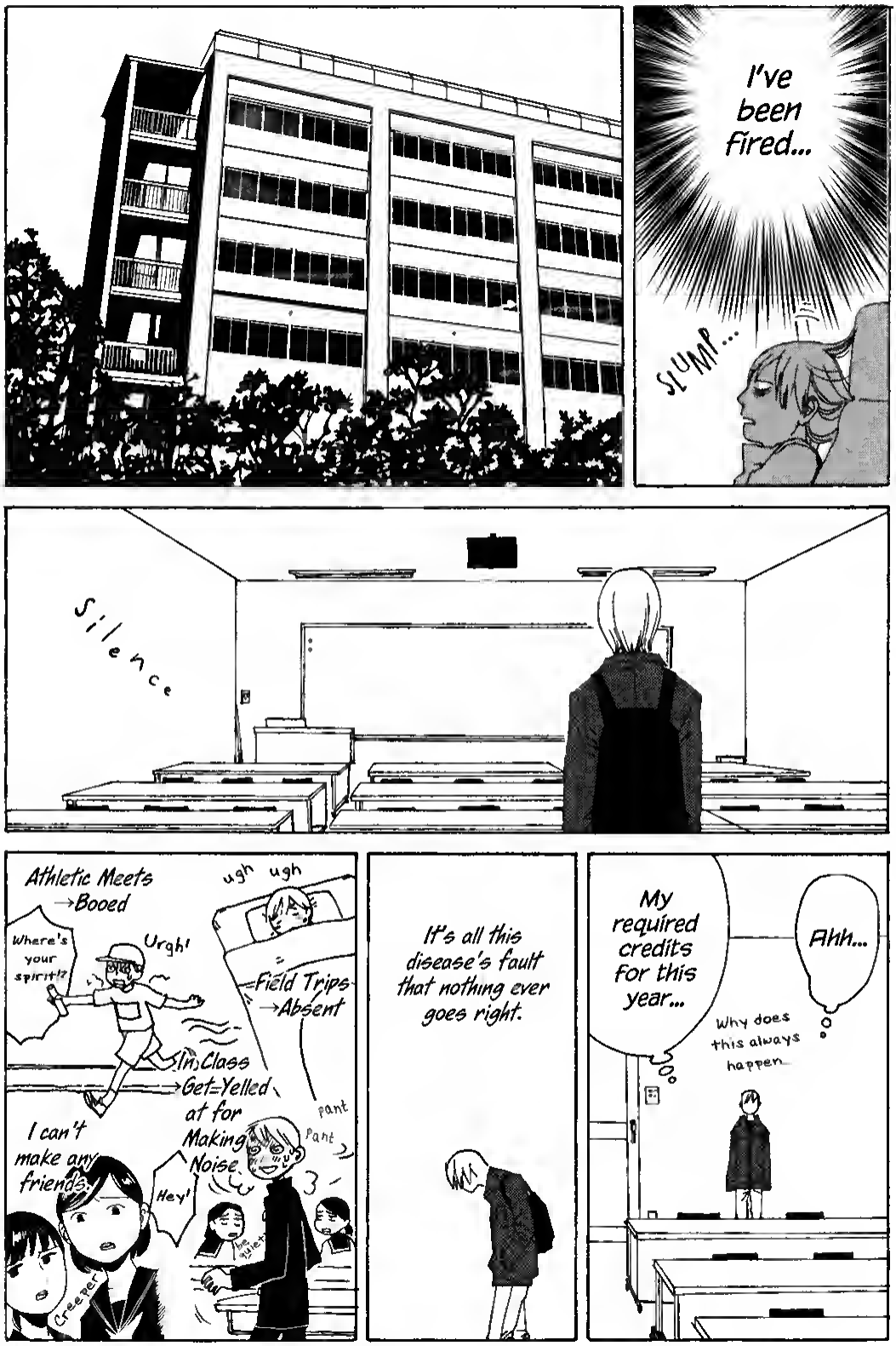
Shiff...

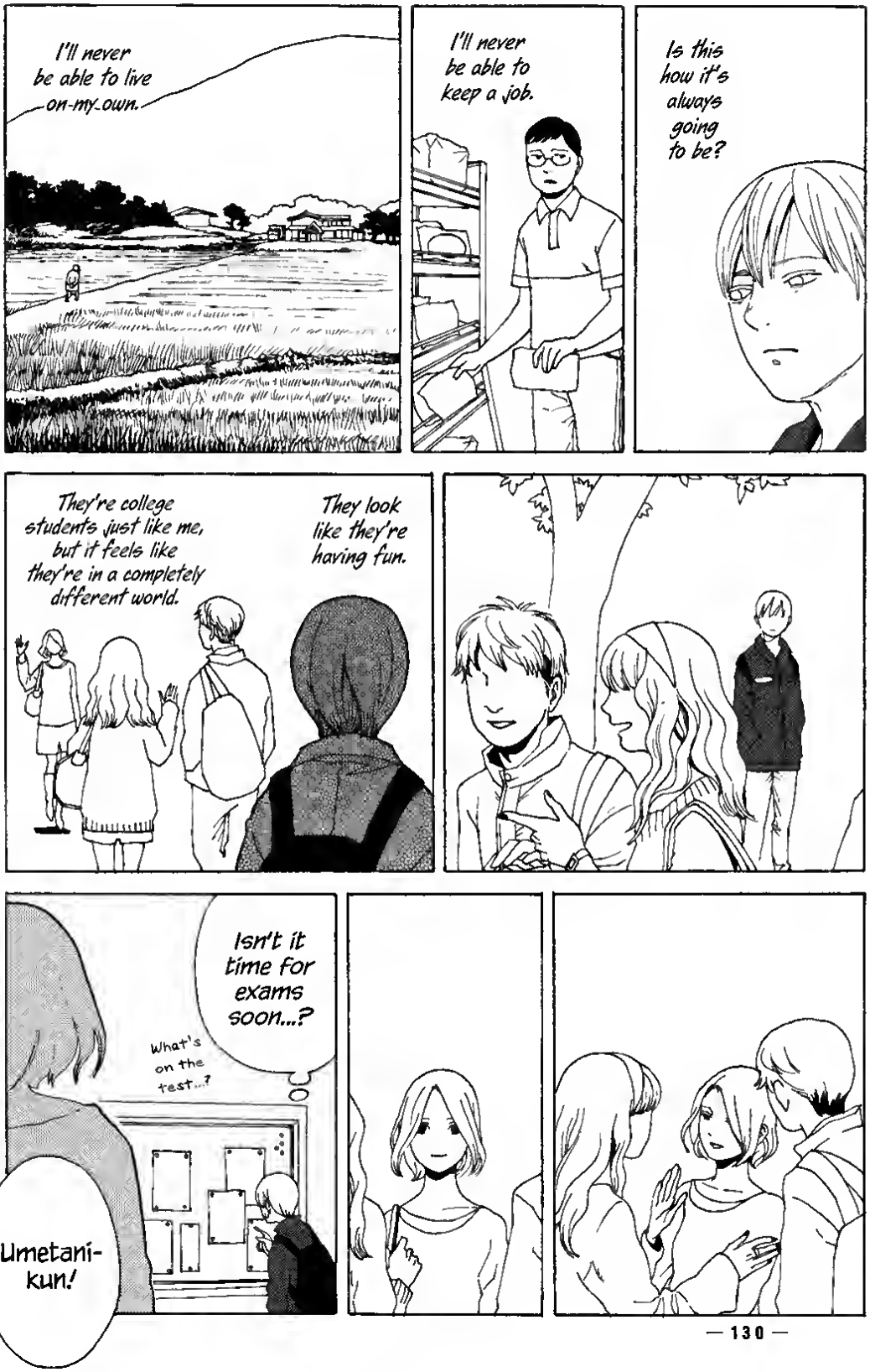

To Kota-kun,
I hope you feel better now! Please make sure to drink some water and try to rest. I'll be back in the evening.
Mom

I told her that there's no way I'm gonna keep anything down...
Urgh
FLUFF
sigh
Anyways, I need to make sure I wake up in the morning the day after tomorrow or I'm gonna drop one of my core classes...
Gotta set my alarm
...Ah, I got a voicemail from work.
...
What could it be...?
...

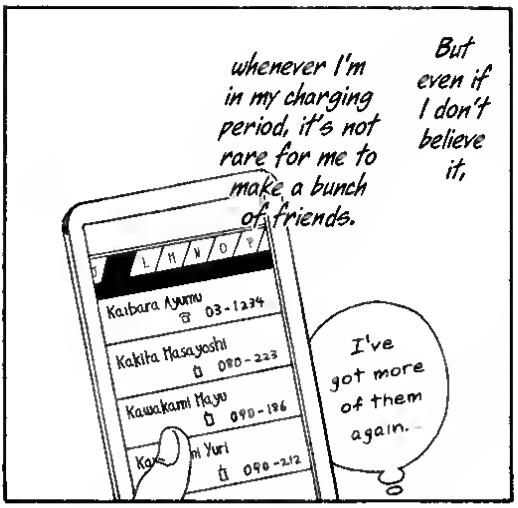

Keita-kuuuuun,
it's morn-ingggg!
RAWR
I thought I told you not to wake me up for at least a whole day!
Close the screens!
You're going to be late for college.
...
...
It's seven in the morning, one whole day after.
And I didn't.
Why couldn't you have woken me up earlier!?
ZZ ?
ZZ
ZZ
(Today)
18th
Exempt Until..
17th
16th
Went to Bed
...

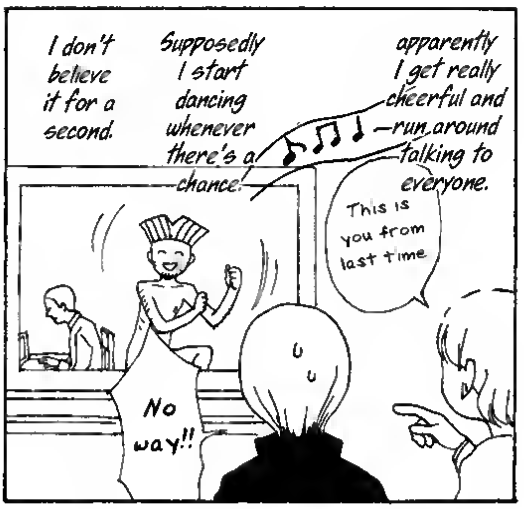
Oh yeah, there was that message from work that I got.
It's impossible, there's no way I'm going to make it in time.
It takes three hours to get to school one way.
YOU SEEM TO BE REALLY BUSY WITH COLLEGE THESE DAYS.
YOU HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO PUT IN MANY SHIFTS AND I'VE ALSO RECEIVED SOME INPUT ABOUT THE MATTER FROM KAMAE-SAN.
UMETANI-KUN, I HAVEN'T HAD ANY TIME TO MEET WITH YOU SO I HAVE TO TELL YOU THIS OVER VOICEMAIL.
PLEASE FOCUS ON YOUR STUDIES AS MUCH AS YOU WANT.
GOODBYE.
click
BZZZ
10·11 Shift Schedule
Kamae Misato
Shouchi
Hoshiaki
Masayuki
WE DIDN'T WANT TO MAKE YOU OR ANY OF THE OTHER EMPLOYEES DO ANYTHING UNREASONABLE.
WE DECIDED TO PUT A NEW EMPLOYEE THAT WE HIRED LAST MONTH IN THOSE SHIFTS.

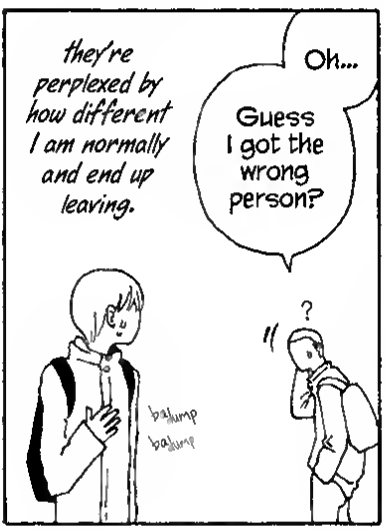

I've been fired...
SLUMP...
Silence
Athletic Meets →Booed
ugh ugh
Where's your spirit!?
Urgh!
=Field Trips →Absent
In Class →Get Yelled at for Making Noise.
I can't make any friends.
Hey!
Pant Pant
Creeper
It's all this disease's fault that nothing ever goes right.
My required credits for this year...
Ahh...
Why does this always happen


I'll never be able to live on my own.
I'll never be able to keep a job.
Is this how it's always going to be?
They're college students just like me, but it feels like they're in a completely different world.
They look like they're having fun.
Isn't it time for exams soon...?
What's on the test...?
Umetani-kun!

Y-
Yeah.
You didn't get the outline for what was going to be on the exam, right?
You want a copy?
Huh?
!?
Were you late?
You weren't in class just now, what happened?
Hold on, I'll send it to you now.
Oh, I'll send you a picture of it.
Why does she know my mail address?
tap
tap
tap
BR RRRR
According to my mother...
I don't remember much of anything during the charging period.
It's probably similar to being completely drunk.
I don't remember her at all, but I must've been the one to approach her.
Kurashima Saya...
Messages
The Test! ☺
Kurashima Saya 11/11/6
You forgot something
No Subject
No Subject


But even if I don't believe it,
whenever I'm in my charging period, it's not rare for me to make a bunch of friends.
L H N O ?
Kaibara Ayumu 03-1234
Kakita Masayoshi 080-223
Kawakami Mayu 090-186
Ka... n Yuri 090-212
I've got more of them again.


I don't believe it for a second.
Supposedly I start dancing whenever there's a chance.
apparently I get really cheerful and run around talking to everyone.
This is you from last time
No way!!

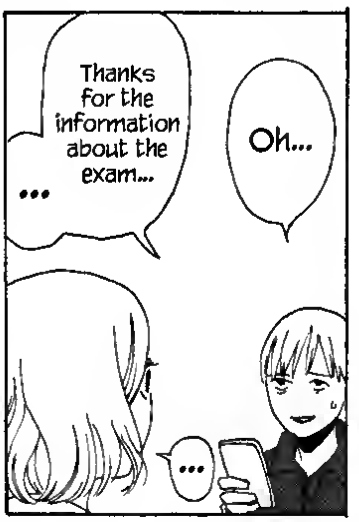

they're perplexed by how different I am normally and end up leaving.
Oh...
Guess I got the wrong person?
?
ba-bump
ba-bump

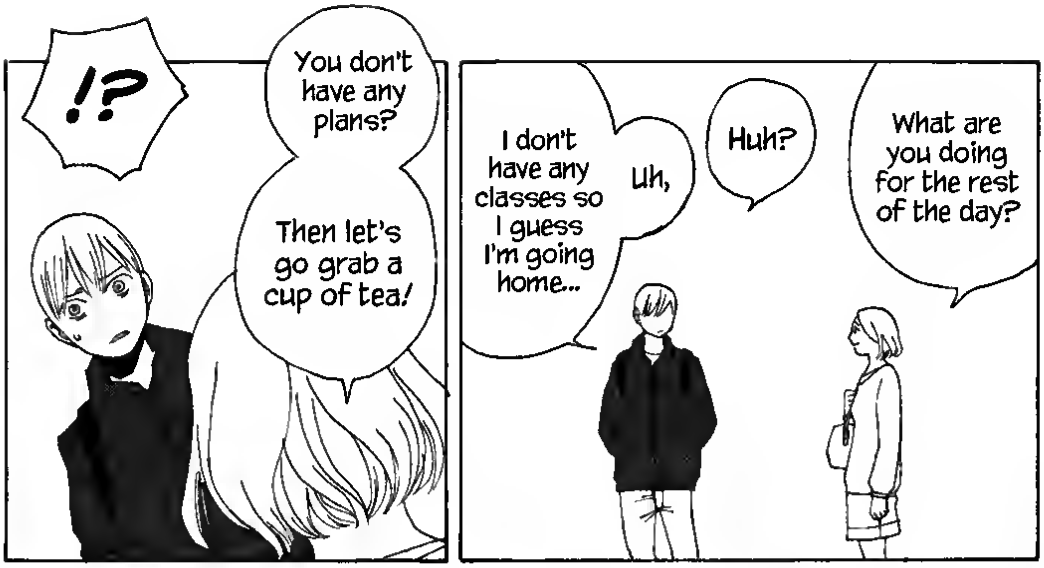
Who are you...?

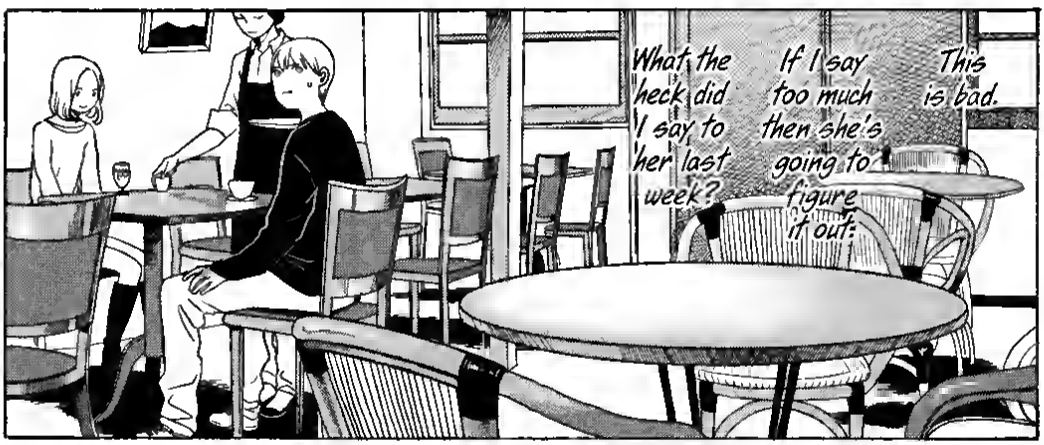
When people I meet that way come up to me...
WHUMP!
Yo! How you doing?
SMART

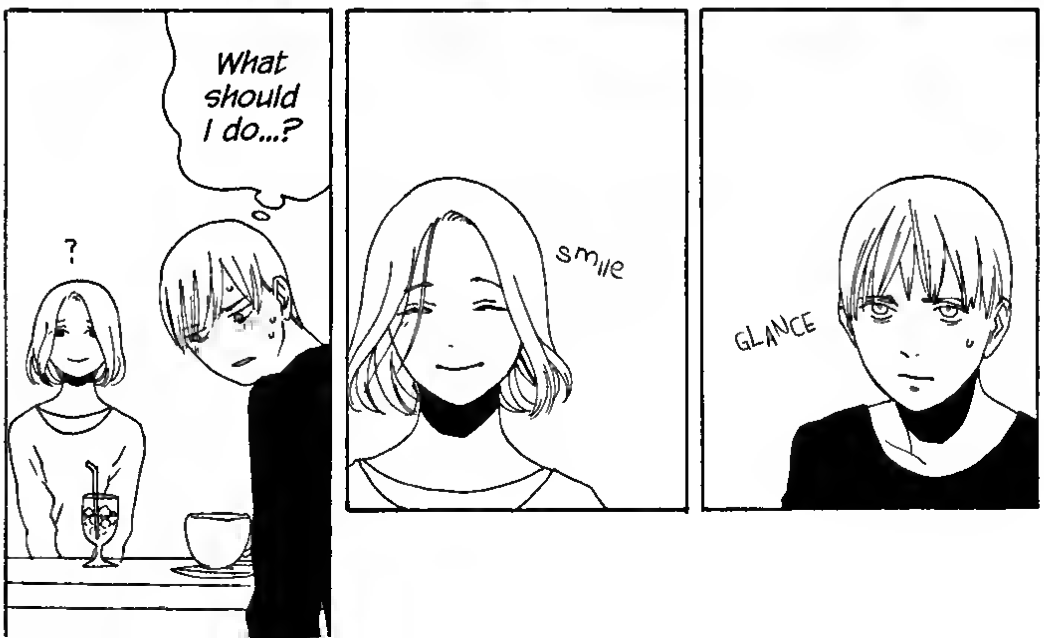
As if I could say that...
I'm a werewolf so I don't remember anything that happens during the days around the full moon.

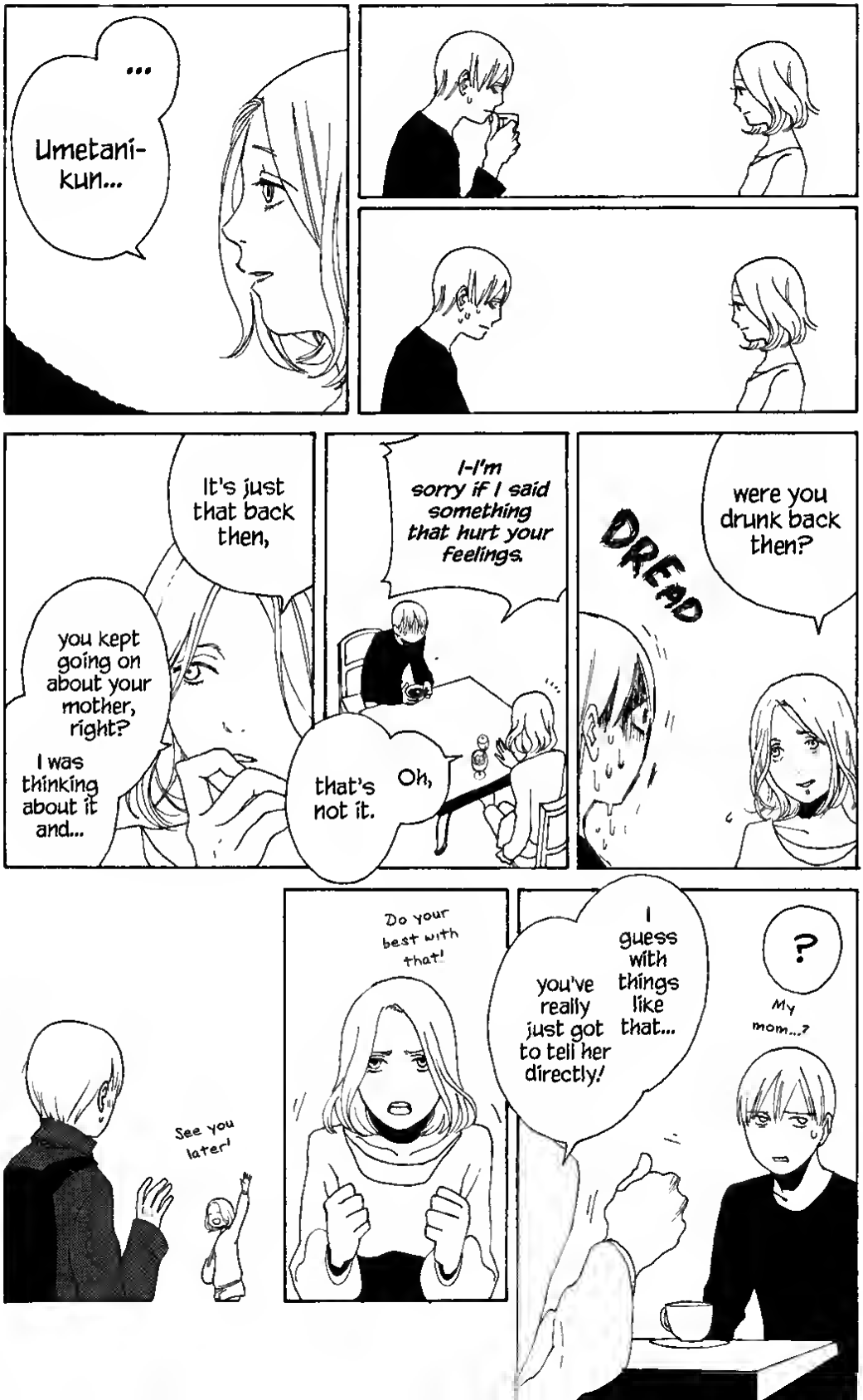
Umetani-kun, you're sort of quiet today.
R...
Really?

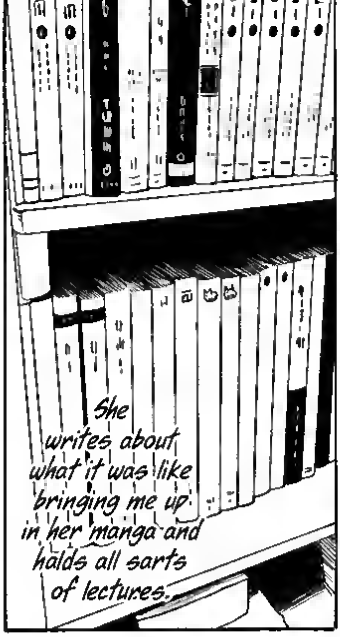

Thanks for the information about the exam...
...
Oh...
...

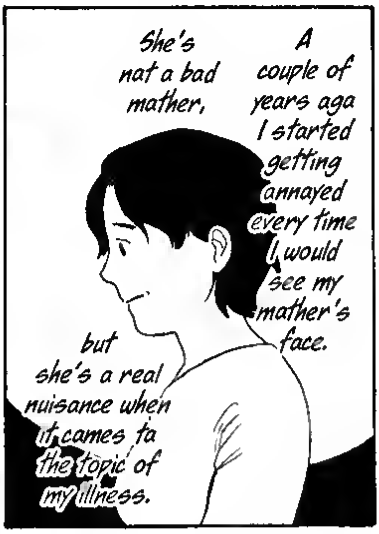

!?
You don't have any plans?
Then let's go grab a cup of tea!
What are you doing for the rest of the day?
Huh?
Uh, I don't have any classes so I guess I'm going home...


What the heck did I say to her last week?
If I say too much then she's going to figure it out.
This is bad.


What should I do...?
?
smile
GLANCE

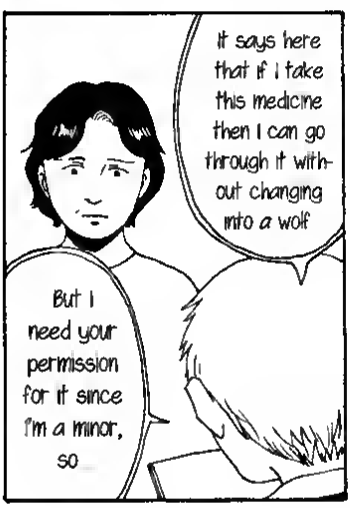

...
Umetani-kun...
I-I'm sorry if I said something that hurt your feelings.
Oh, that's not it.
It's just that back then,
you kept going on about your mother, right?
I was thinking about it and...
DREAD
were you drunk back then?
?
My mom...?
I guess with things like that...
you've really just got to tell her directly!
Do your best with that!
See you later!

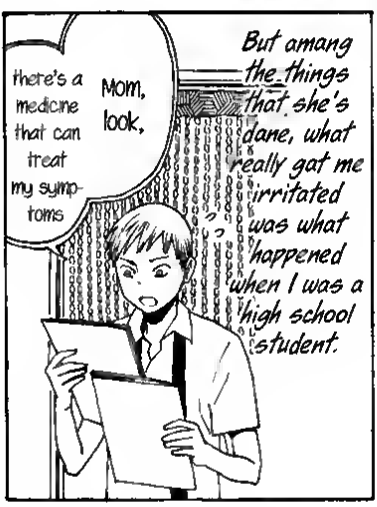

She writes about what it was like bringing me up in her manga and holds all sorts of lectures.

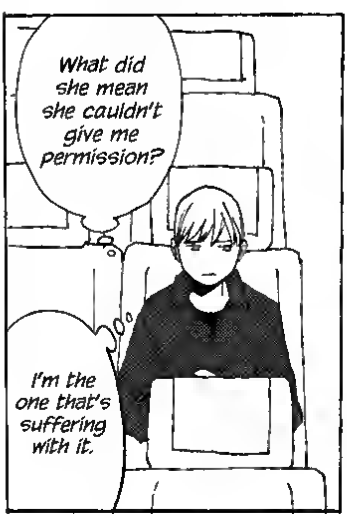

She's not a bad mother,
A couple of years ago I started getting annoyed every time I would see my mother's face.
but she's a real nuisance when it comes to the topic of my illness.

Did I ramble on about all the complaints I had about her?
I talked about my mom?
I'm so embarrassed...

I can't give you permission for that.

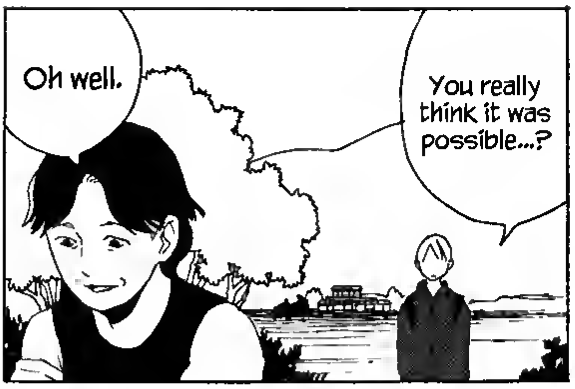

It says here that if I take this medicine then I can go through it without changing into a wolf
But I need your permission for it since I'm a minor, so...

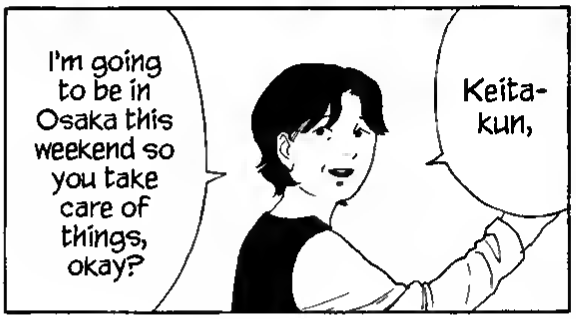

Mom, look, there's a medicine that can treat my symptoms
But among the things that she's done, what really got me irritated was what happened when I was a high school student.

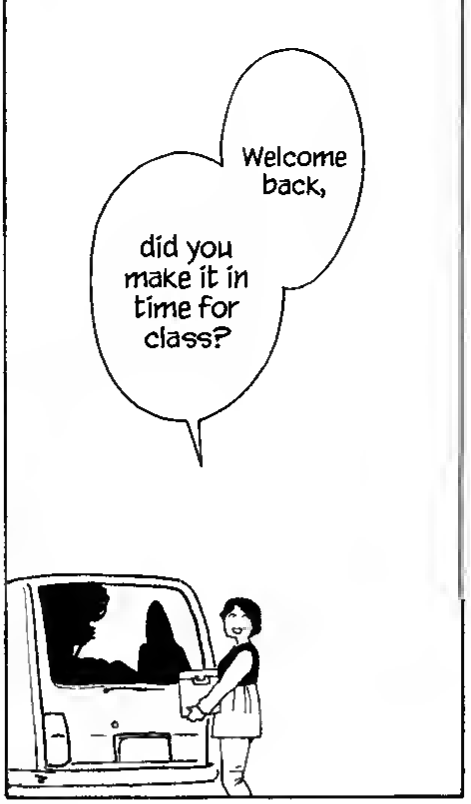

What did she mean she couldn't give me permission?
I'm the one that's suffering with it.

but I was still left with this uneasy feeling towards it all.

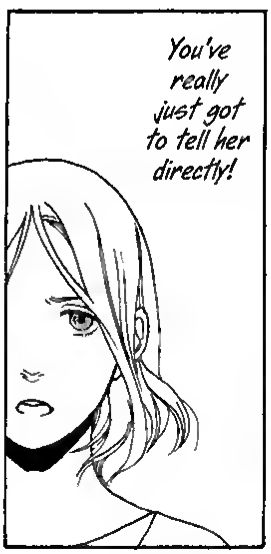
There wasn't really anything more I could say about the matter,
Her tone was unusually strong.


Oh well.
You really think it was possible...?


I'm going to be in Osaka this weekend so you take care of things, okay?
Keita-kun,

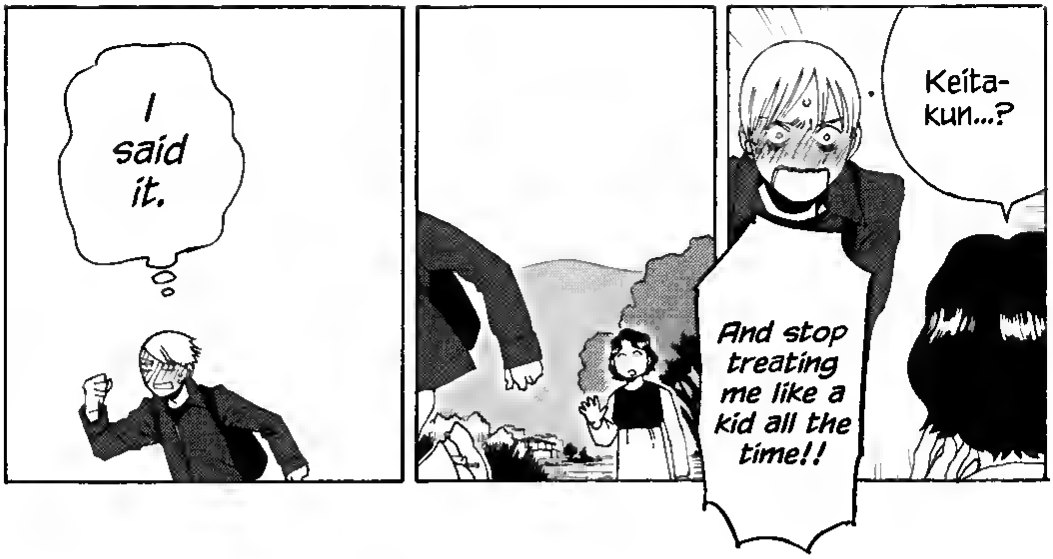

Welcome back,
did you make it in time for class?

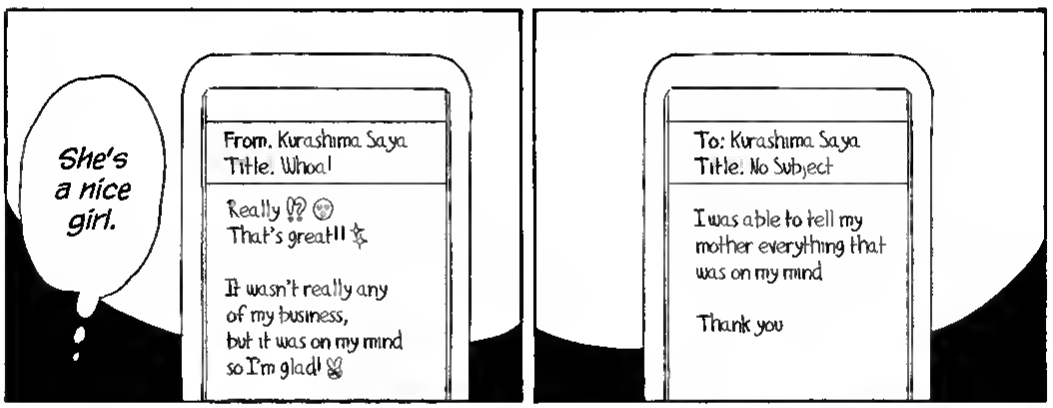
...

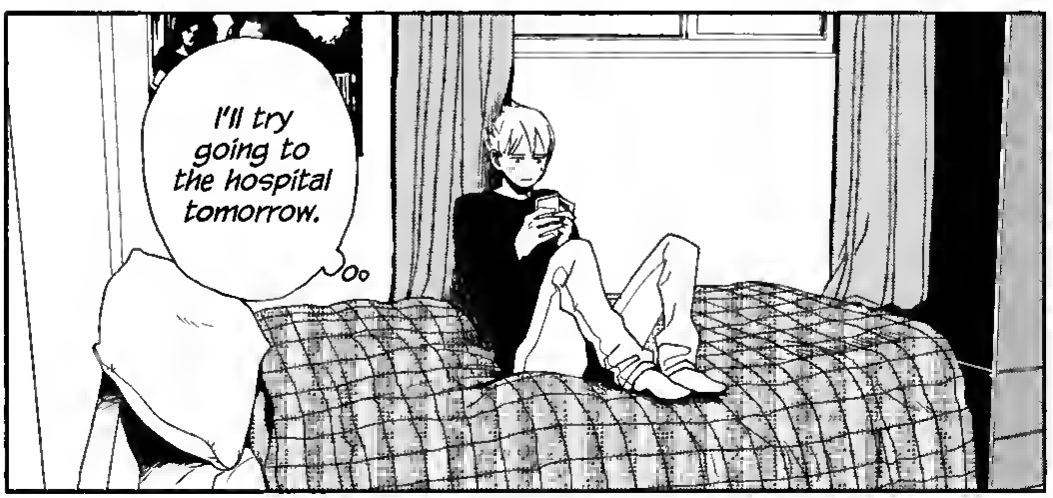

You've really just got to tell her directly!

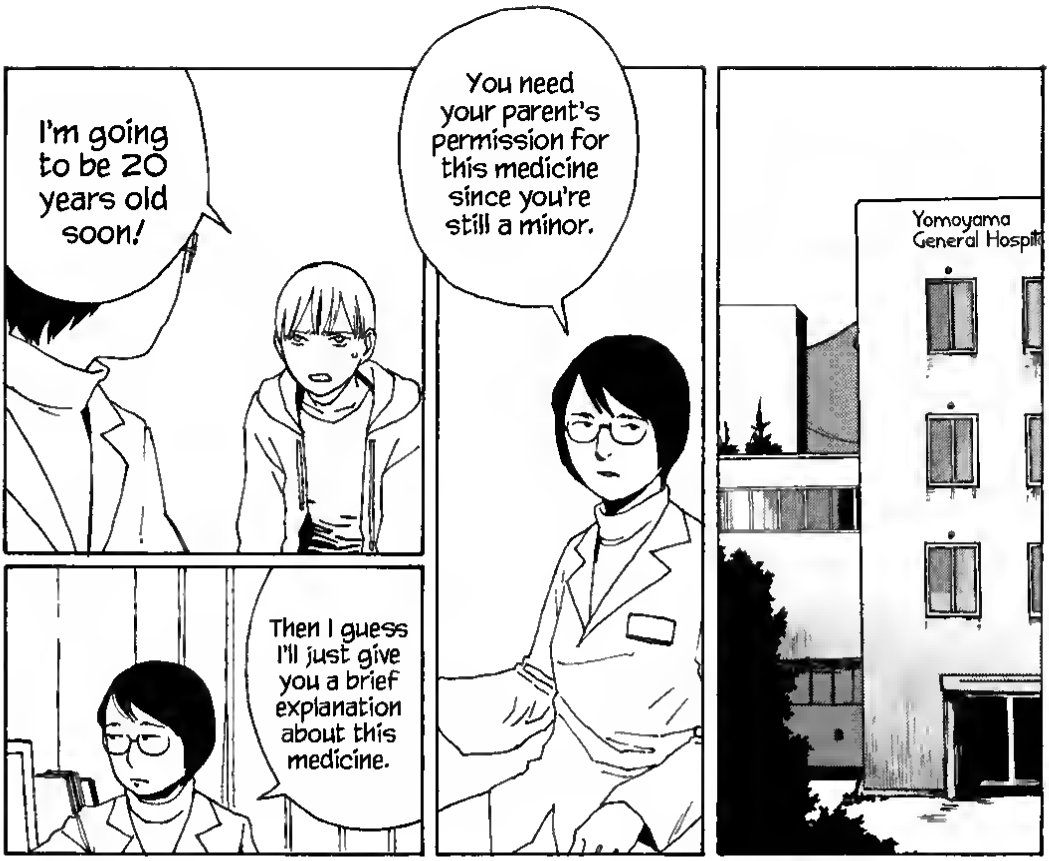
That's right,
they insisted that I come.
You've got another lecture?
Whump

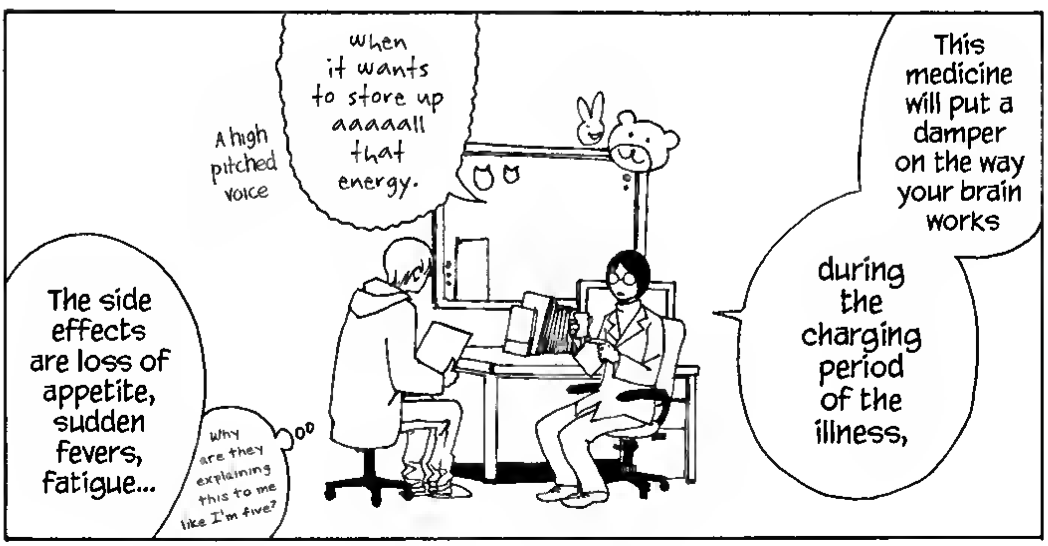
"My son may be unhappy because he was born with this disease,"
Your lectures and that stupid manga...
It must be nice.
Huh?
It must be nice to be able to win people over by saying things like that.
"but as a result of my hard work, I was able to raise him properly without relying on any strange medicines."
Can't you stop using me as an excuse to do all of that?
You say that it's all for my sake, but it's really about satisfying yourself.


I said it.
Keita-kun...?
And stop treating me like a kid all the time!!


She's a nice girl.
From. Kurashima Saya
Title. Whoa!
Really !? :o
That's great!! ☆
It wasn't really any of my business, but it was on my mind so I'm glad! :)
To: Kurashima Saya
Title. No Subject
I was able to tell my mother everything that was on my mind
Thank you


I'll try going to the hospital tomorrow.


I'm going to be 20 years old soon!
You need your parent's permission for this medicine since you're still a minor.
Yomoyama General Hospital
Then I guess I'll just give you a brief explanation about this medicine.

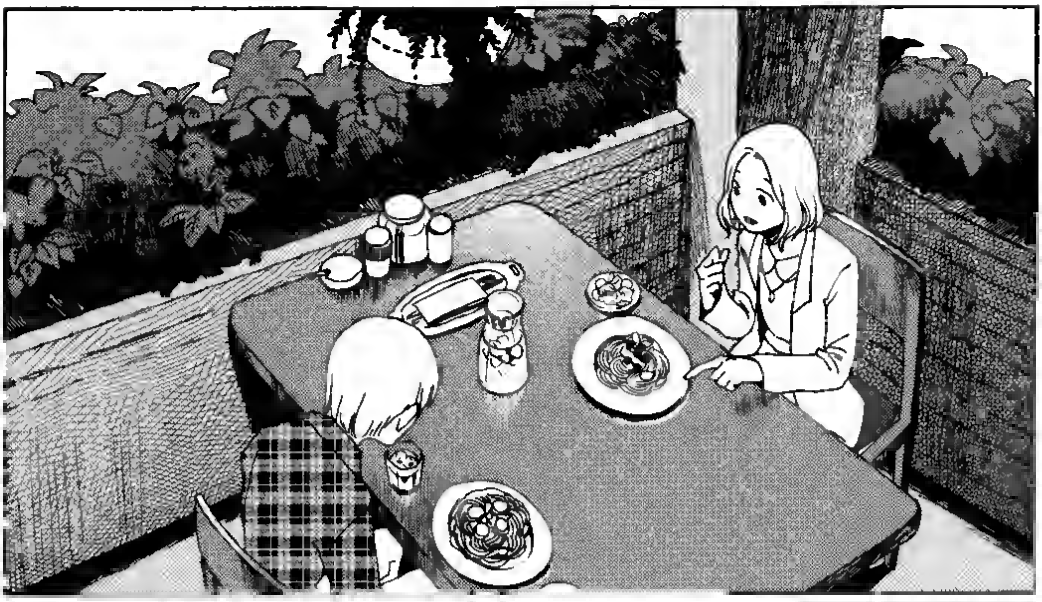

A high pitched voice
when it wants to store up aaaaall that energy.
This medicine will put a damper on the way your brain works during the charging period of the illness,
The side effects are loss of appetite, sudden fevers, fatigue...
Why are they explaining this to me like I'm five?

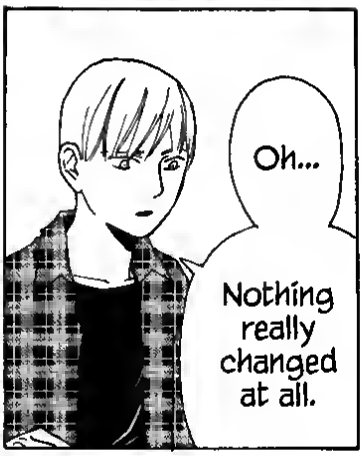
As long as it'll help me deal with this body I'm in.
That doesn't matter.
If you use it often while you're young it'll increase the risk of heart related conditions,
so I can't recommend it.
By the way,
If your symptoms are considerably extreme,
or if you've caused harm to others, then it's a whole different story.
it's generally not covered in insurance so it'll be quite expensive.
It's happened.
I've caused someone a great deal of harm before.

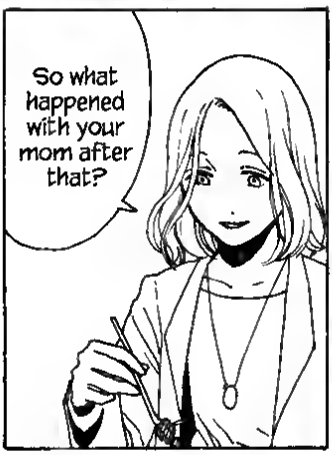
HONK HONK
Ah!
VROOM

though you're not going to eat much of anything.
Make sure to take it after meals,
It's the third day of the charging period.
It's crazy, I don't want to eat anything at all.
GLUG
Keita-kun, breakfast.
I don't need any.
He usually eats this much.
...Oh.
Is it even okay to call this a date?
I wonder if I'm going to be okay for my date today.
It feels like I sort of have a fever?
My body is really heavy.
It's like I'm experiencing the symptoms after discharge first.

You look a bit sleepy. Are you okay?
Huh? I'm fine.
Good morning, Kurashima... san.
Oh.
Good morning, Umetani-kun.
Huh? Do you have a husky or something?
What?
No, he's a chihuahua.
chi hua hua
giggle
?
SHOCK
I just can't help but think of the dog I have at home whenever I see you.

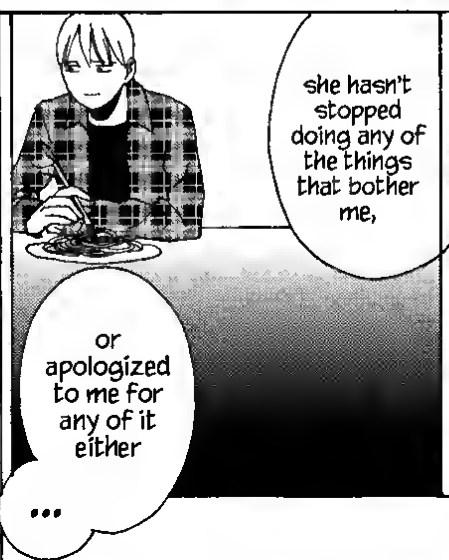



Oh...
Nothing really changed at all.

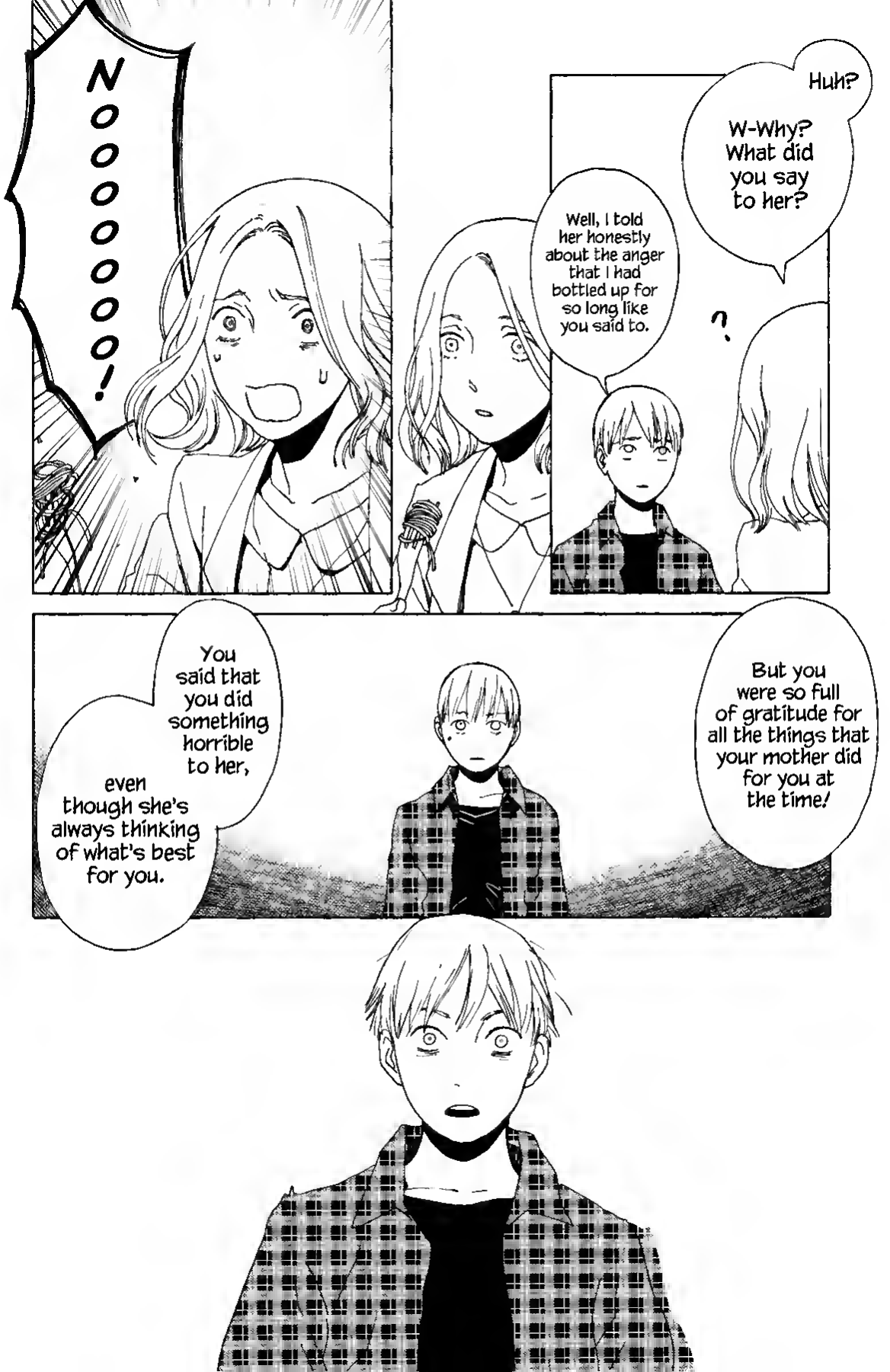

So what happened with your mom after that?

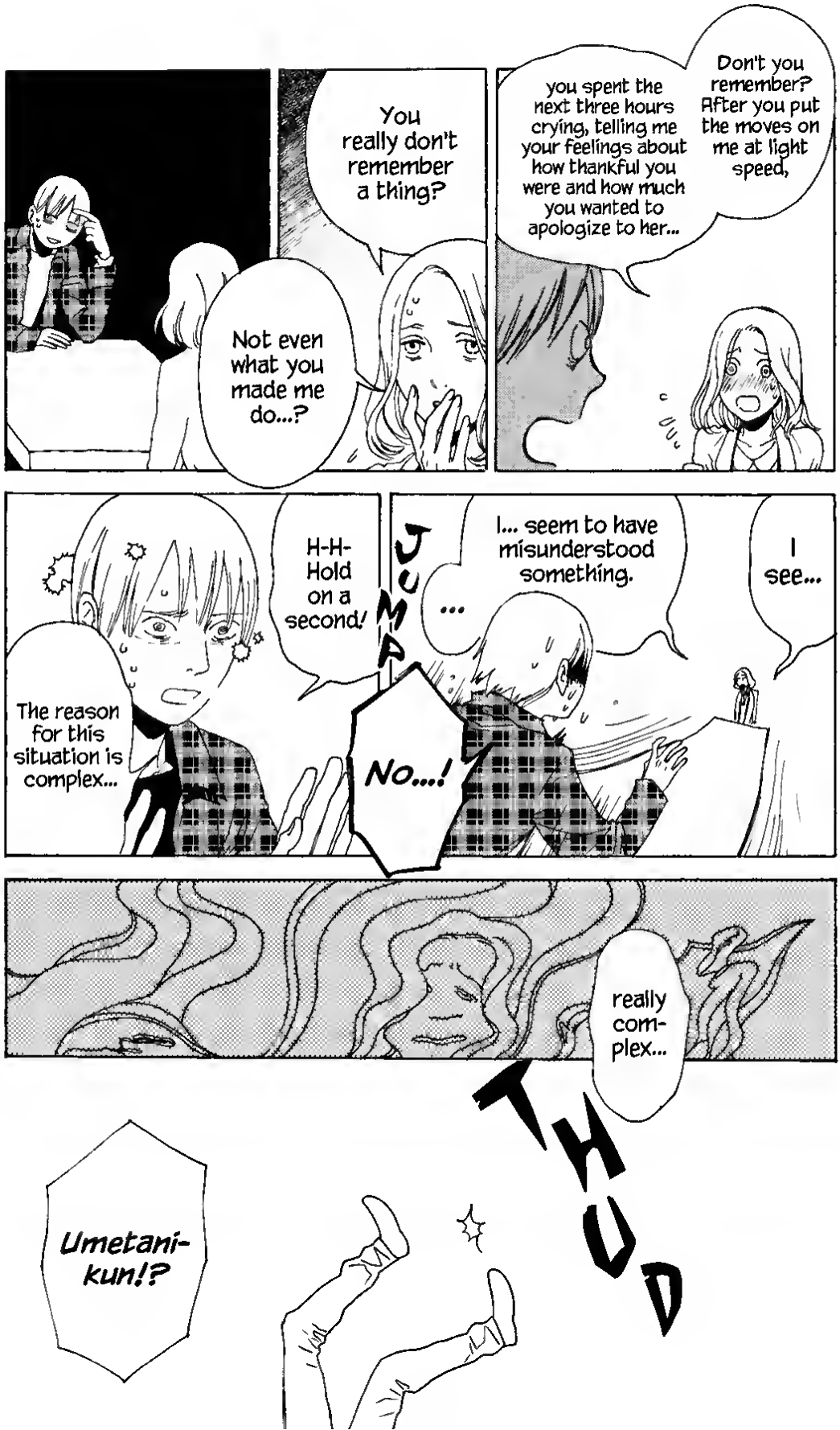
I don't want to eat at all.
I can't do it.
It looks really good

Apologize to you?


she hasn't stopped doing any of the things that bother me,
or apologized to me for any of it either
...

I have no idea what she's thinking,


NOOOOOOO!
Huh?
W-Why? What did you say to her?
Well, I told her honestly about the anger that I had bottled up for so long like you said to.
?
But you were so full of gratitude for all the things that your mother did for you at the time!
You said that you did something horrible to her, even though she's always thinking of what's best for you.


You really don't remember a thing?
Not even what you made me do...?
Don't you remember? After you put the moves on me at light speed,
you spent the next three hours crying, telling me your feelings about how thankful you were and how much you wanted to apologize to her...
I see...
I... seem to have misunderstood something.
...
H-H-Hold on a second!
The reason for this situation is complex...
JUMP
NO...!
really com-plex...
THUD
Umetani-kun!?

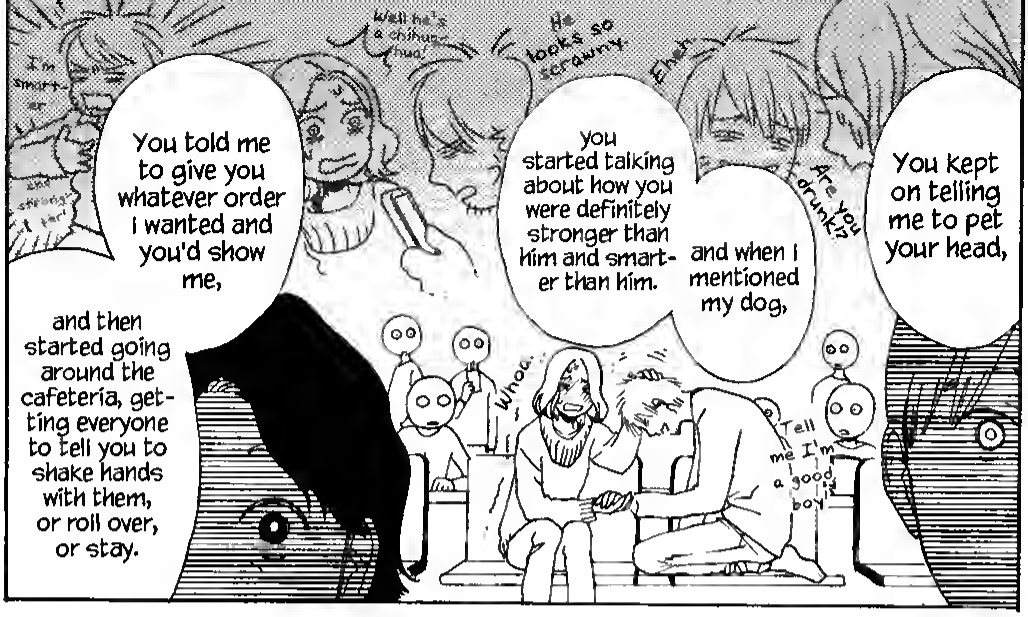
Wow.
This feels so good.
I feel like I can run anywhere I wont.
I feel so happy. This is so much fun.
I want to go over there.
I can see lights all over in that direction.
I'm sure it'll be really fun over there.

He just got lightheaded, that's all.
Oh, he's awake.
Mom...
Keita-kun!
Whoa.

Mom.
I'm sorry,
I'm sorry that I make you worry.
even though you're always thinking about what's good for me.
I'm sorry for being so cold to you,
I'm sorry for biting your arms.
Thank you for everything.

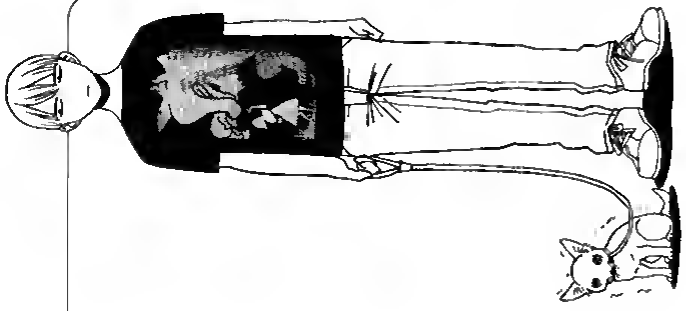
I was so scared, but,
when you bit me, I really felt like
you weren't the son that I knew anymore.
I was even more scared that I would think something like that.
sob
sob
sob
HOOOOK
You know,
I should've been thinking about your feelings too.
I'm sorry.
it would somehow be okay,
but,
This is so heart warming
I wanted to tell people who harbored the same insecurities that...
He's not some separate personality that came out from my werewolf sickness,
but just another part of me...
I really wish he wouldn't do all those embarrassing things out in the open, though
that uneasy feeling that I had in my chest has finally been lifted.
I guess...
he knows me pretty well after all.
It feels like...

Uh,
um...
No wonder you've been so concerned about your illness recently.
I didn't know you had any friends that were this cute.
...But anyways,
Huh?
Please take care of yourselves
Sorry for causing such a fuss
I'm sorry. I wasn't planning on keeping it a secret.
The chances of you getting infected with it aren't high.
A were-wolf!?
What illness are you talking about...?
W-What? You didn't tell her about how you're a werewolf yet!?
Hey...!
Geez!
Huh?
Ohhhh!!
So that's why!!
*exchanging blood or fluids
Did you do something that would get her infected!?
No, of course not... I think.
DING


You told me to give you whatever order I wanted and you'd show me,
and then started going around the cafeteria, getting everyone to tell you to shake hands with them, or roll over, or stay.
Well he's a chihuahua, huuf
He looks so scrawny
you started talking about how you were definitely stronger than him and smarter than him.
and when I mentioned my dog,
Whoa...
Tell me I'm a good boy!
Are you drunk?
You kept on telling me to pet your head,

It was a real riot!

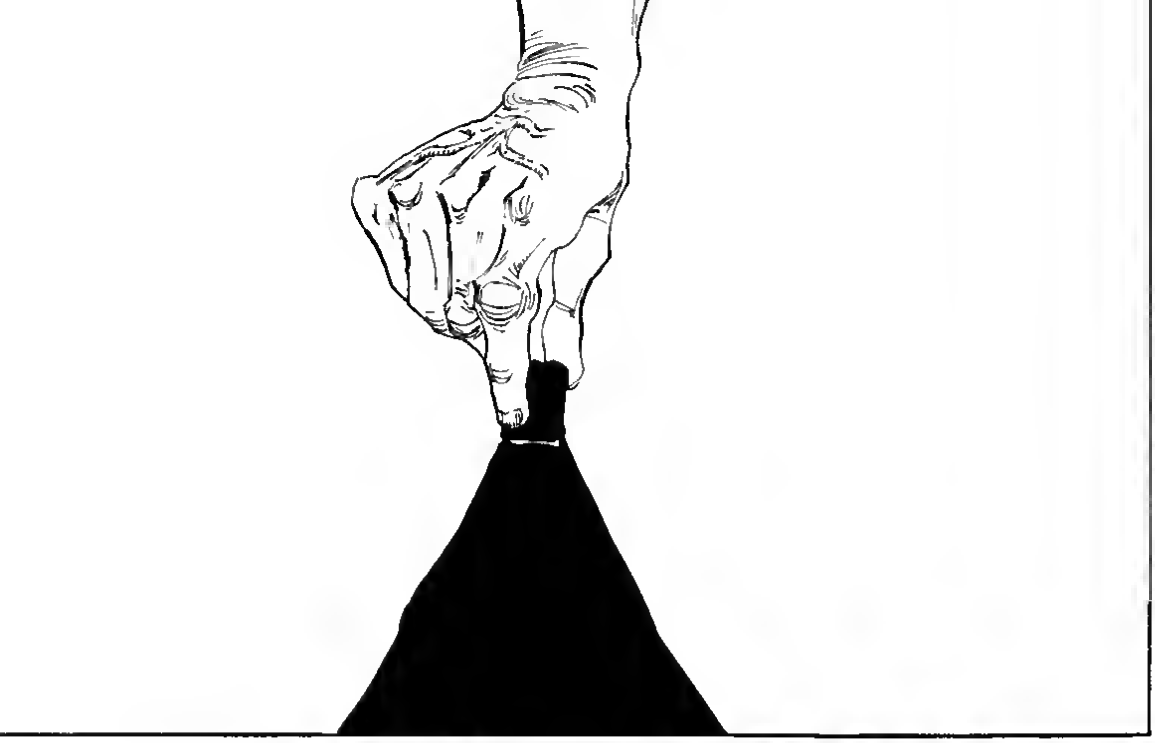
...It looks like
you've found yourself a good trainer.
...

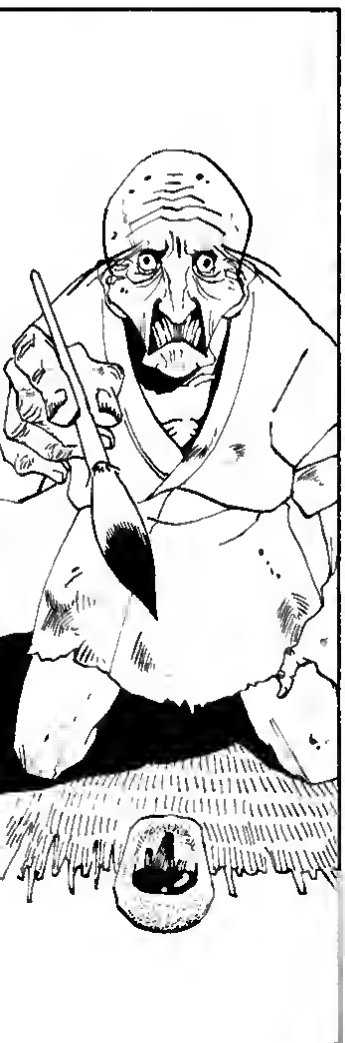


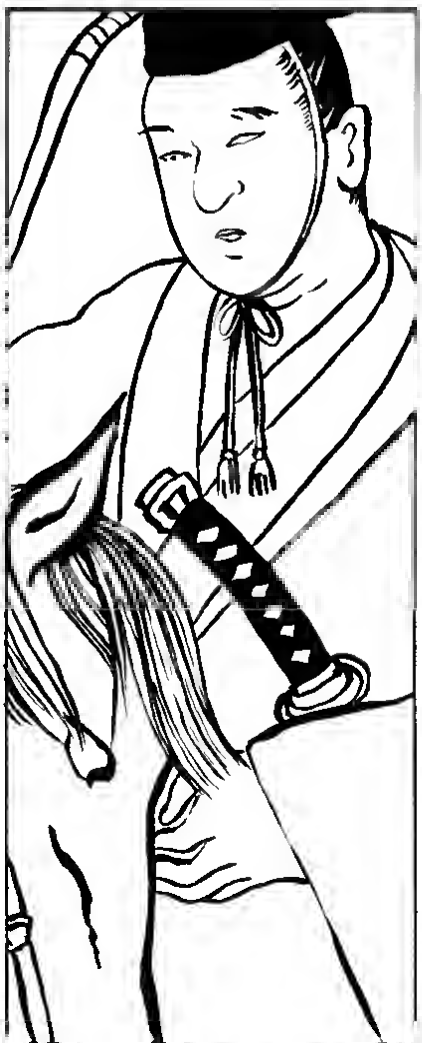
Seven Little Sons Of the Dragon

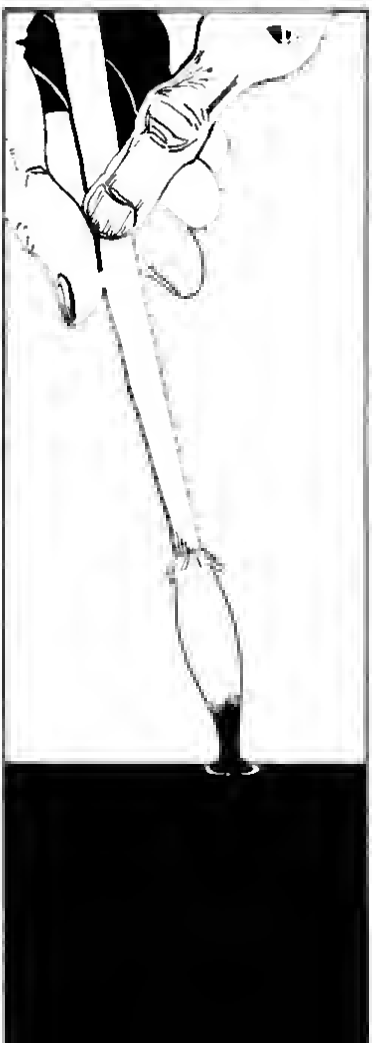
The Fifth Story

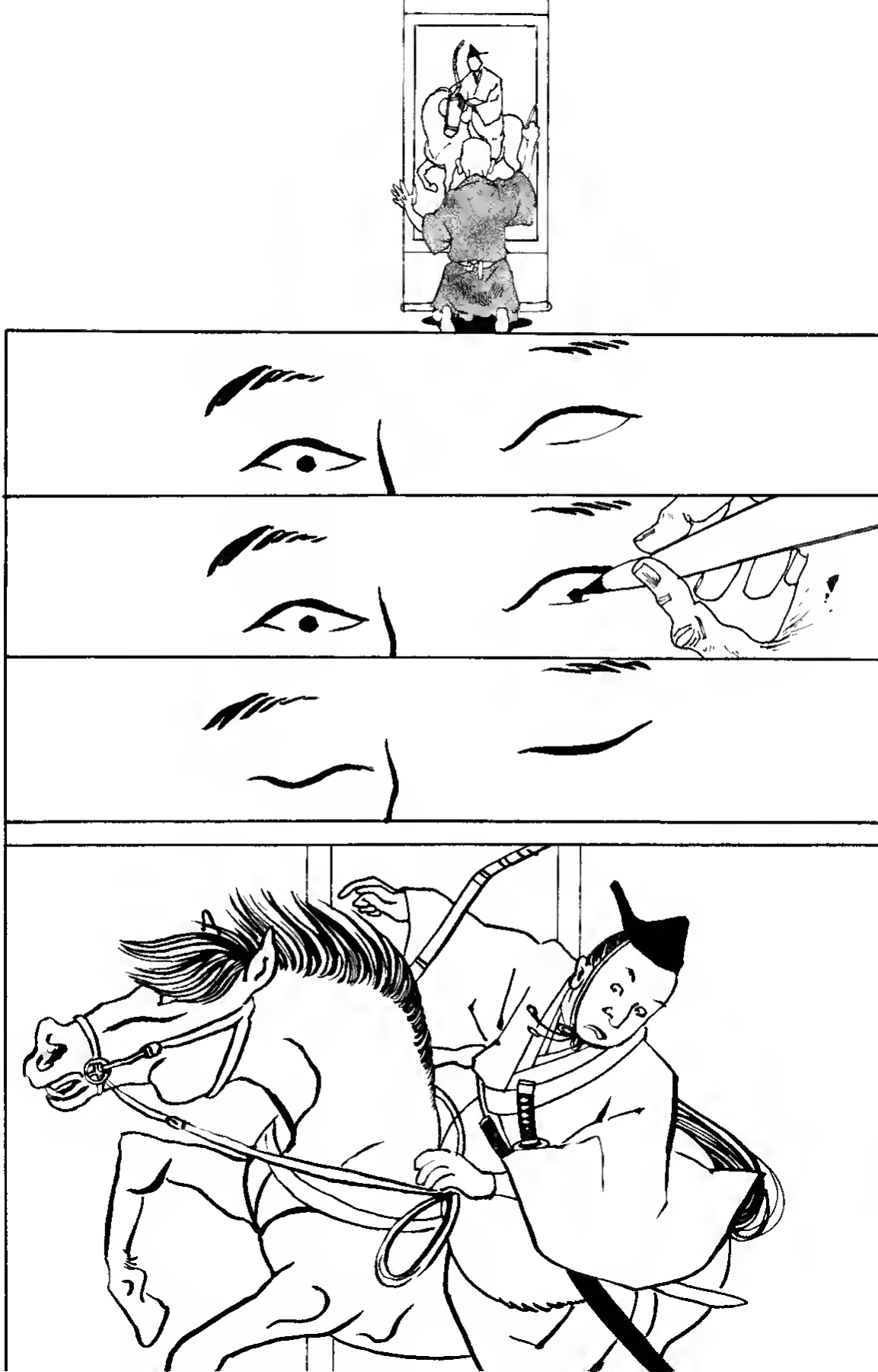
Byakuroku
The Broke



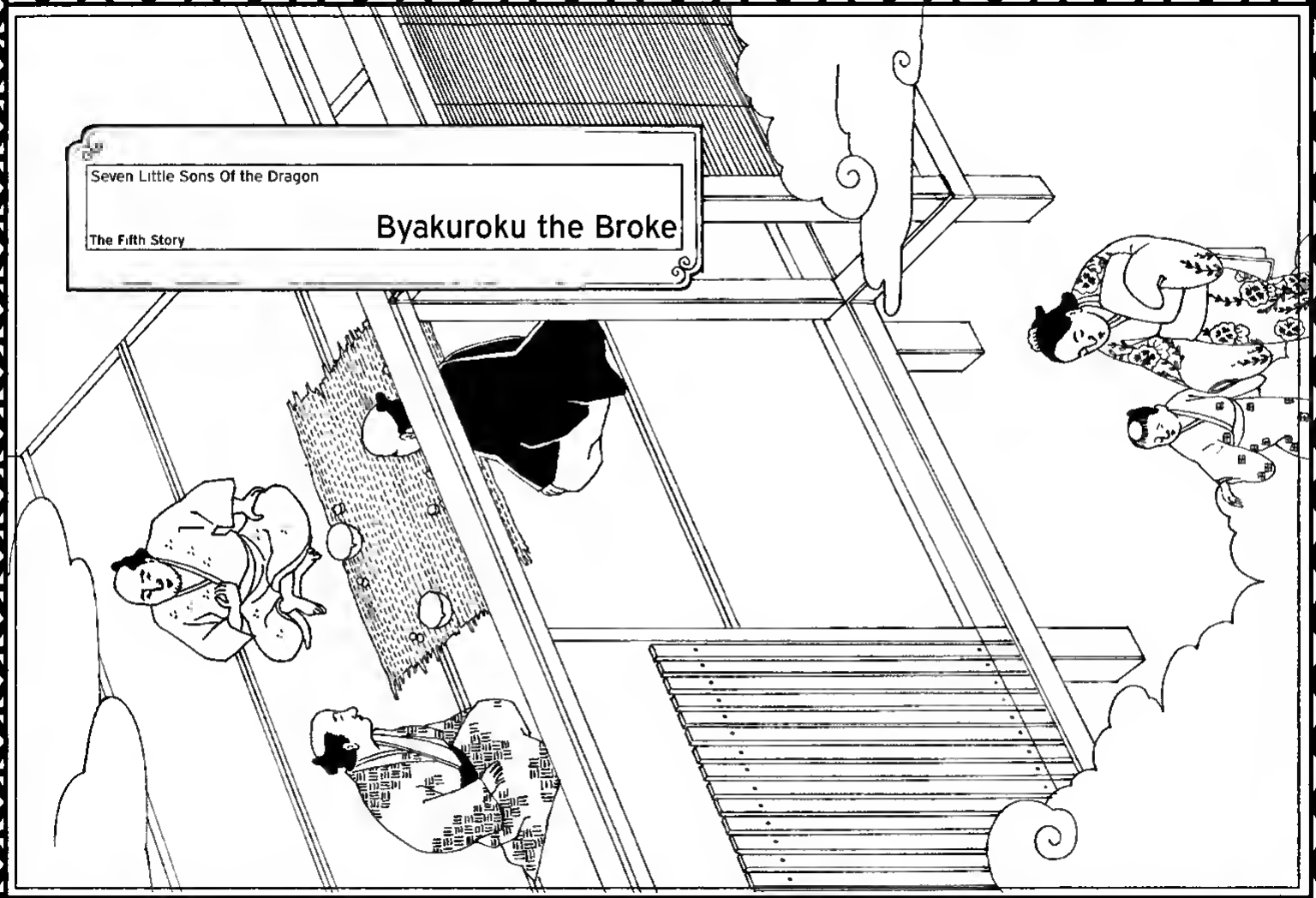








Huh?
Where...
am I...?
ouch...
Gack!
TUMBLE
TUMBLE
THUD
Are you aware of who you are and what kind of situation you're in?
Come to your senses, have you?
Wagh!
Whaaat!?
BOOM
you're a forgery by some ne'er-do-well of one of the hanging scrolls that I painted!
To put it more precisely,
Uhm...
No, not at all.
and you're the painting from the scroll hanging over there.
I'm the painter known as Takagawa Byakuroku,

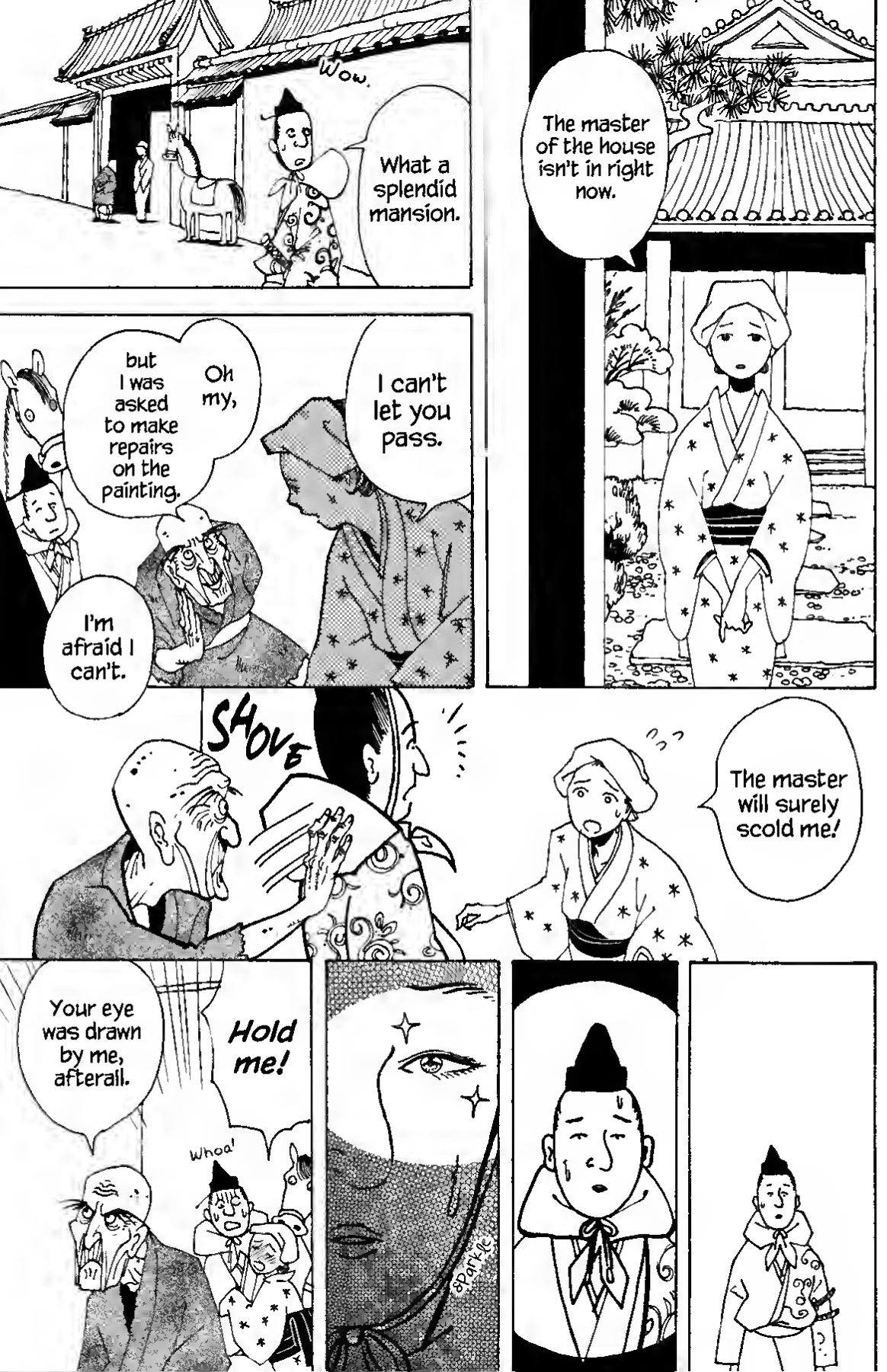

Seven Little Sons Of the Dragon
The Fifth Story
Byakuroku the Broke

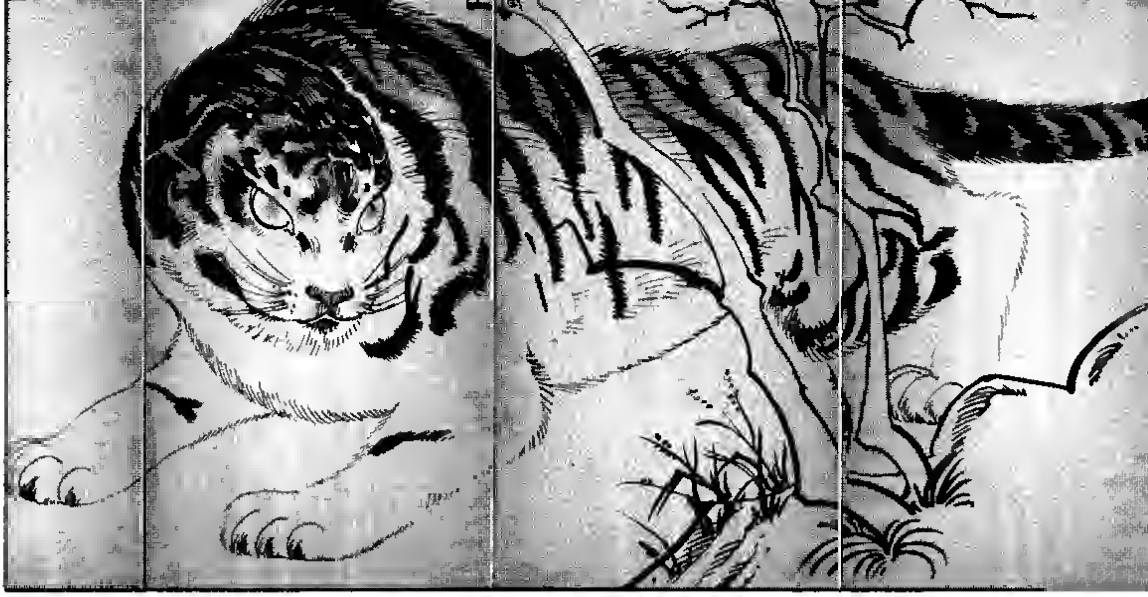
The mere mention of the name Takagawa Byakuroku garners instant praise all throughout the capital for his paintings.
It's said that with the skillful movements of his brush,
the living creatures that he paints, spring up and leap out from the paper,
and that is the reason why he never fills in both of their pupils...

I've got no money.
I also sold off most of my art supplies.
Whaaat!?
Ink
Fine Point Brush
Inkstone
I was cheated and had it stolen from me.
Huh?
Why? What happened?
I see, then why don't you just draw some more paintings and sell them?
I can sell them at a high price.
If I fill in their other pupil and bring them into the real world,
Really?
until now,
I've drawn many living creatures that don't exist, like shishi lions and dragons.
That's when it struck me,

...
...Then for what reason did you fill in my pupil?
I've had plenty of my works forged before, but this is the first time I've seen one as ugly as you.
Whoever did it has no artistic sense at all.
So you're planning on... selling me?
It's true that I'm papery...
Hmm, it seems like somebody slacked off on the bottom half of my kimono.
Who would purchase the likes of you?
What? Oh, this is supposed to be a horse?
I couldn't figure out what kind of animal it was.
What do you think that horse is for?
Huh?
Are you telling me to carry you on my back?
You're going to take me to where I want to go.
My legs are no good.
SPLAT
Now then!

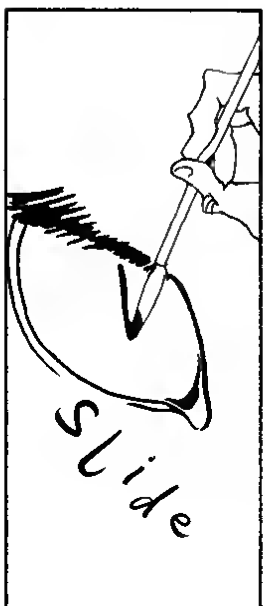
DAMMIT
The painting was too poor, it can't pass for a real horse.
Wrinkles
We can't both ride on top of it.
Ouch
A tiger?
That's quite a fearsome beast.
Will you be able to handle it alone?
First let's go to the village head.
Where shall we head to?
There's a picture of a tiger I sold there.
What do you think I went and filled in your eyes for after I finished with the horse's?
Oh,
What?
I was just something extra...?
You fool.
You're going to capture it.
What?


Wow.
What a splendid mansion.
The master of the house isn't in right now.
I can't let you pass.
Oh my,
but I was asked to make repairs on the painting.
I'm afraid I can't.
SHOVE
The master will surely scold me!
Your eye was drawn by me, afterall.
Hold me!
Whoa!
Sparkle



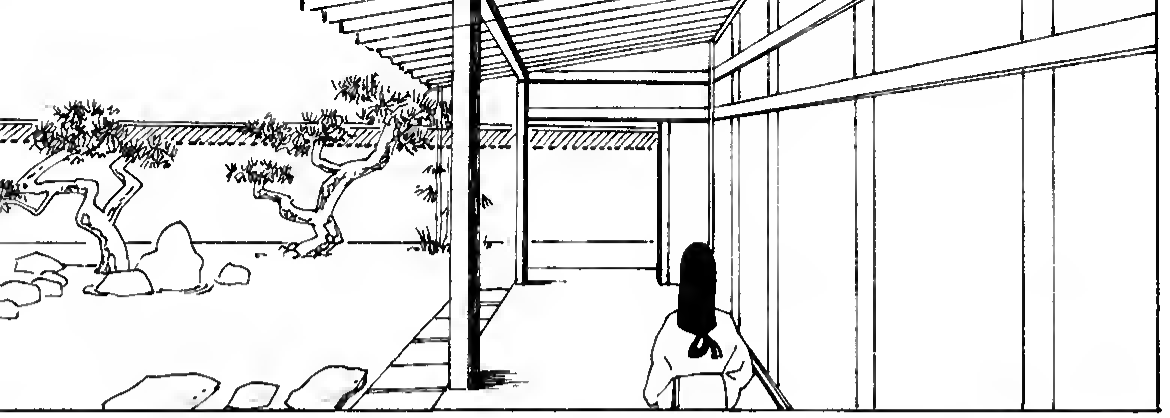
shik
shik

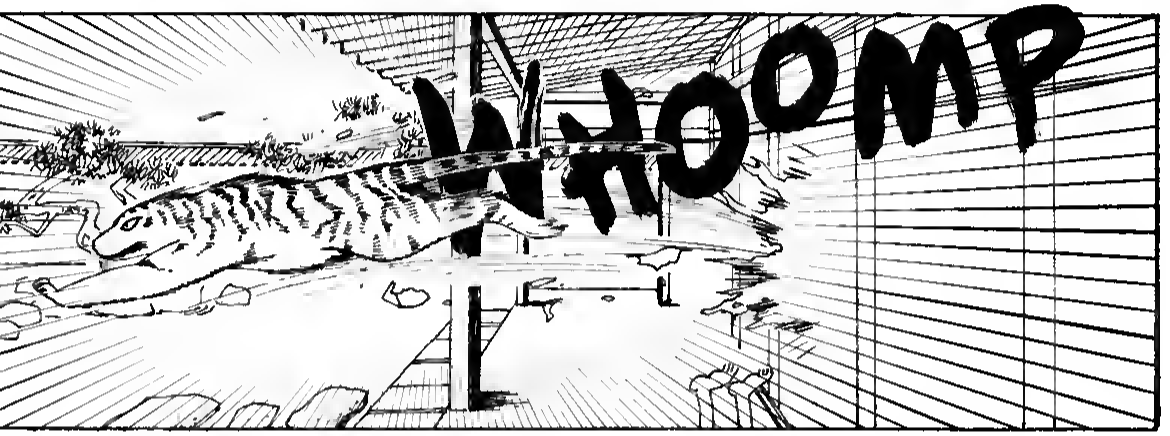
Make sure you do your job.
I'm not entirely confident.
Y-You want me to capture *this*?

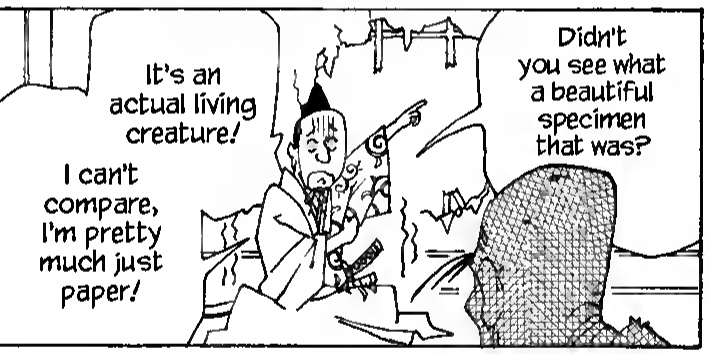

Slide

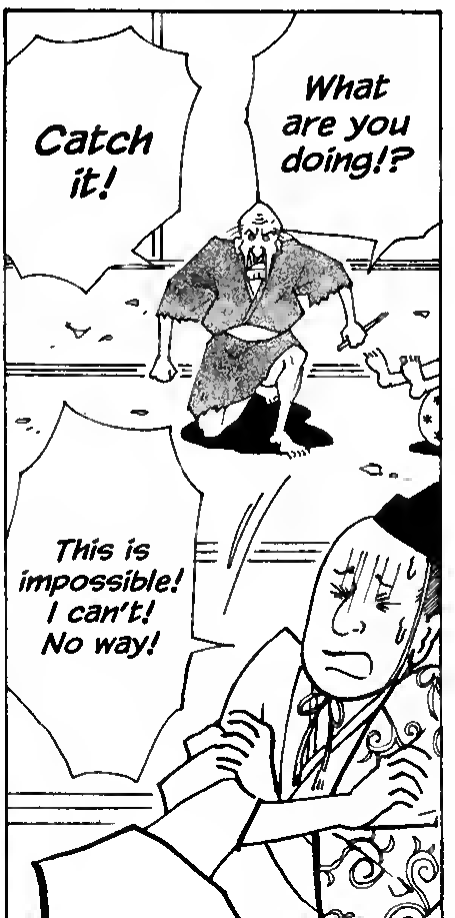
Please stand back

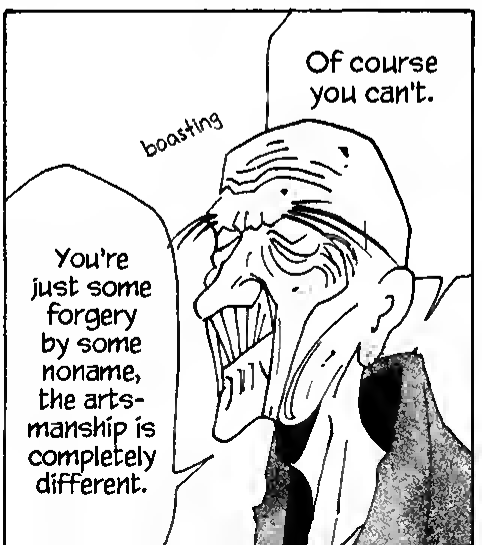
Okay, get ready.

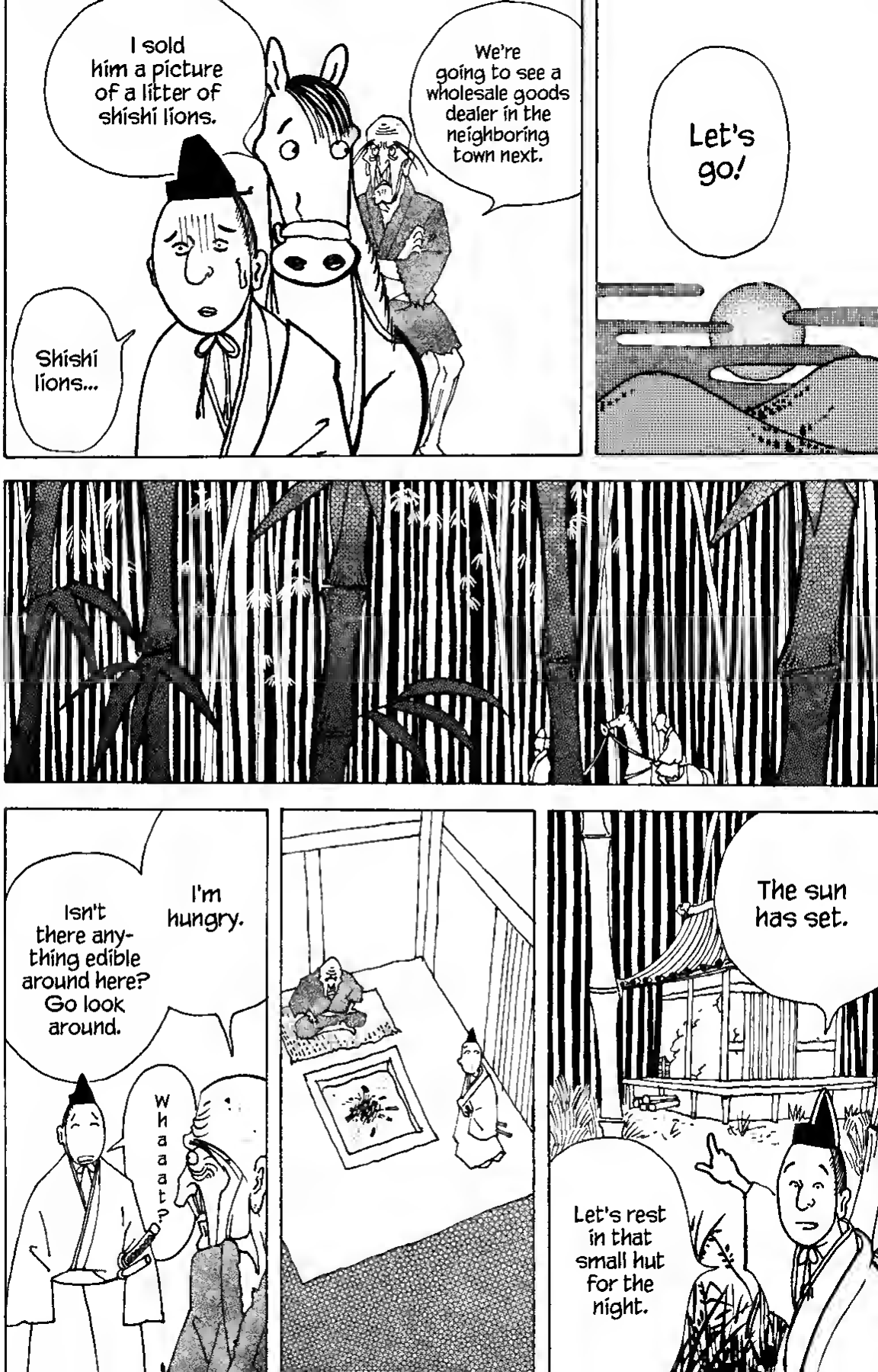



WHOOMP


It's an actual living creature!
I can't compare, I'm pretty much just paper!
Didn't you see what a beautiful specimen that was?


Catch it!
What are you doing!?
This is impossible! I can't! No way!

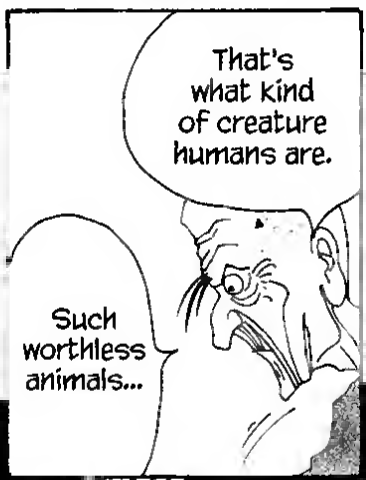

Of course you can't.
boasting
You're just some forgery by some noname, the arts-manship is completely different.

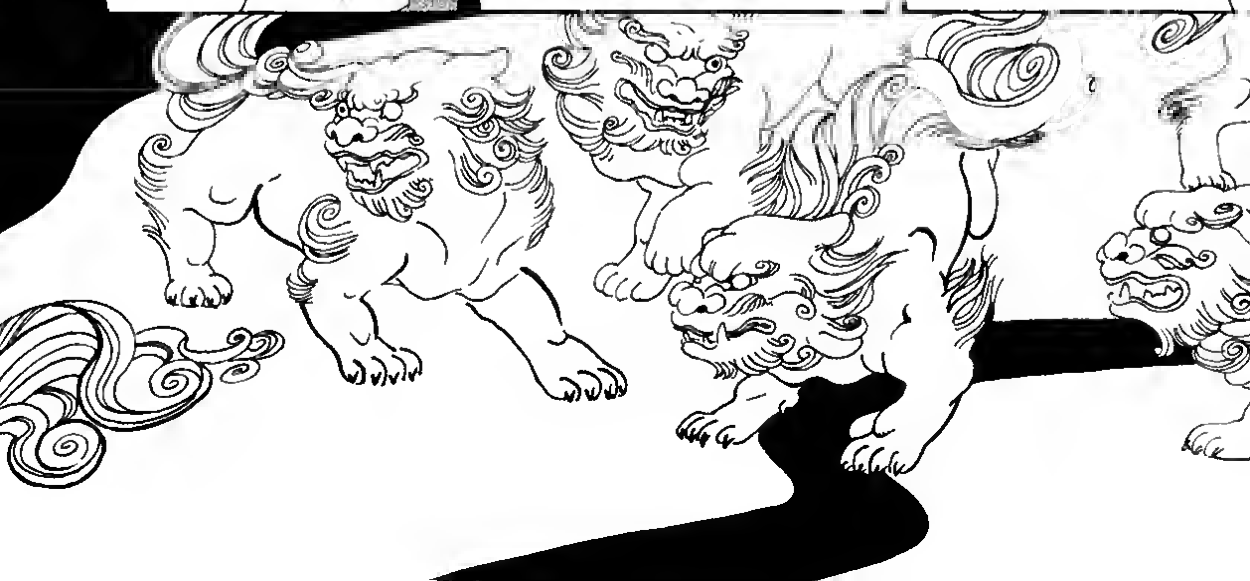

I sold him a picture of a litter of shishi lions.
We're going to see a wholesale goods dealer in the neighboring town next.
Shishi lions...
Let's go!
I'm hungry.
Isn't there anything edible around here? Go look around.
Whaaaat?
The sun has set.
Let's rest in that small hut for the night.

...
fwsh fwsh
How about drawing a painting of something to eat on this?
Oh, there's a board over here.
crackle
He's not very good at drawing anything other than living animals.
My wife ran away with all the money that was left after I was swindled...
My son is working as a doctor in the capital, or so I've heard, but I haven't seen him for twenty years.
Byakuroku-sama, do you not have any family or any disciples?
O-Oh, nothing.
What's that?
Then what if I...
I don't have anyone else left in this world! It's just me, myself, and I!
I don't trust anyone anymore!
and the person that swindled me was my disciple!

Oh, no, not at all. I came about the painting that I gave you in the past.
If you've come to see me about money, as I've stated before...
However...

Bubuzuke is Chazuke in Kyoto. There's an implicit meaning when you serve it to a guest. It may really mean that the person has overstayed and is being politely asked to leave...



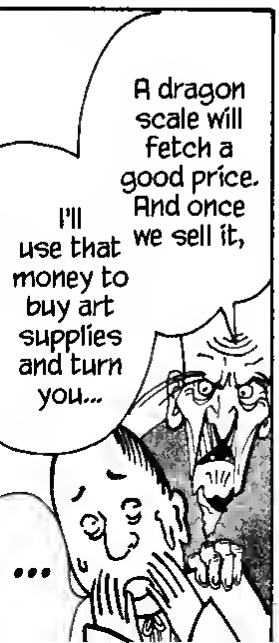


These should be a bit easier to catch than that tiger.
Let's begin.

These creatures are too much for an incomplete being such as I.
I have little ink left, there are no other options.

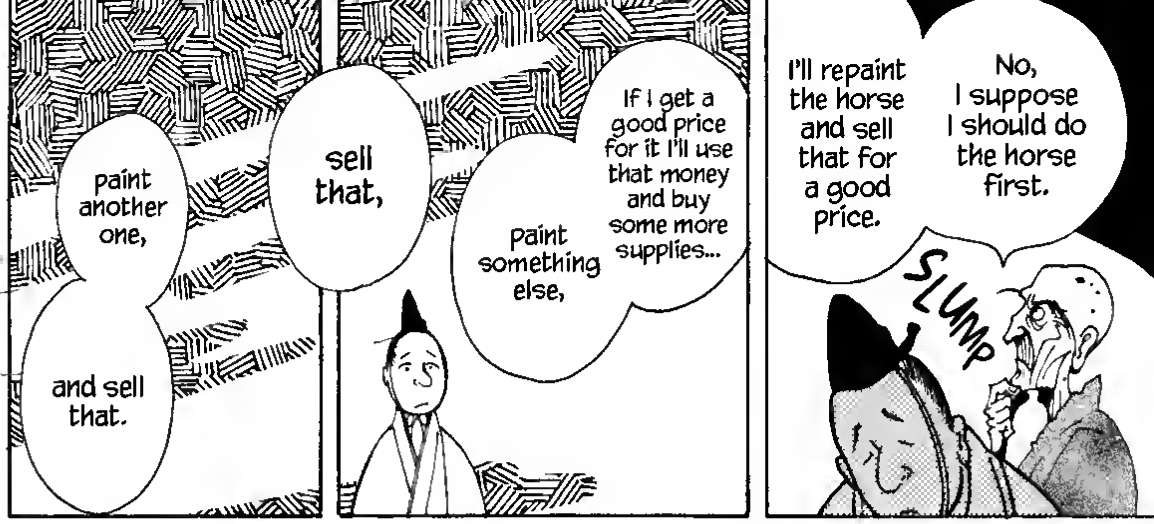
One in the background
You idiot! What's the point to catching such a small one!?
But they were just so quick on their feet!

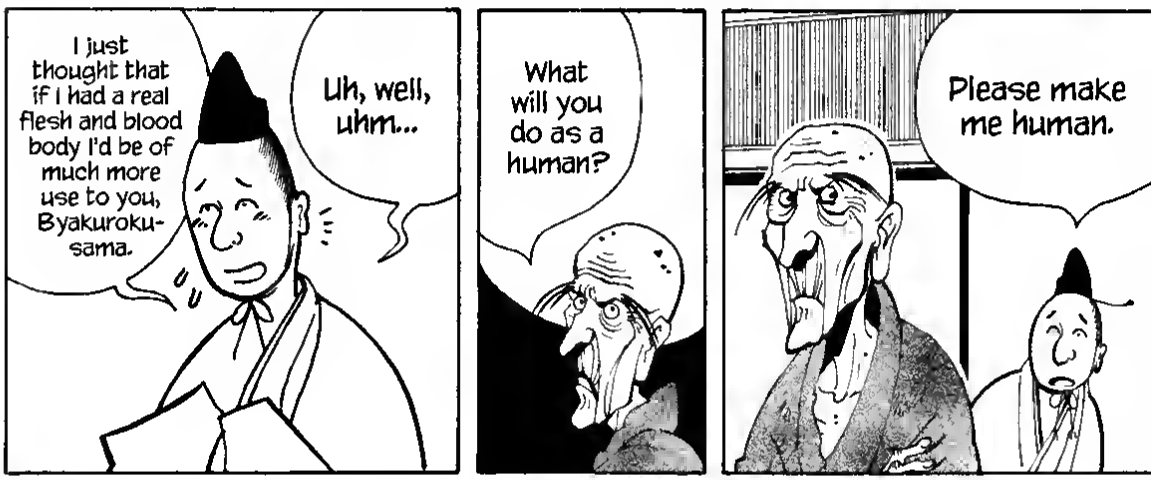
huff
huff
huff

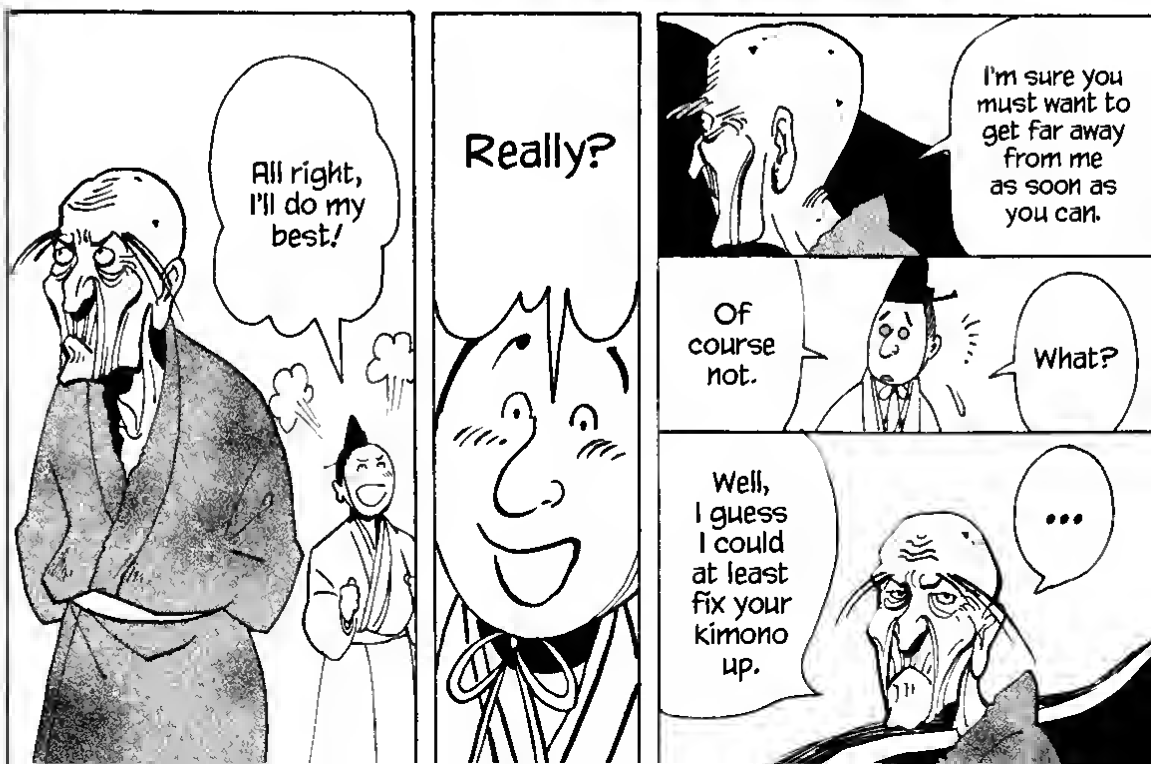

A dragon scale will fetch a good price. And once we sell it,
I'll use that money to buy art supplies and turn you...
...

If things turn out poorly, we'll surely die!
A dragon!?
All you have to do is tear off a single scale.

...It's unavoidable,
we'll have to go after the painting of the dragon at the temple in the mountain next.

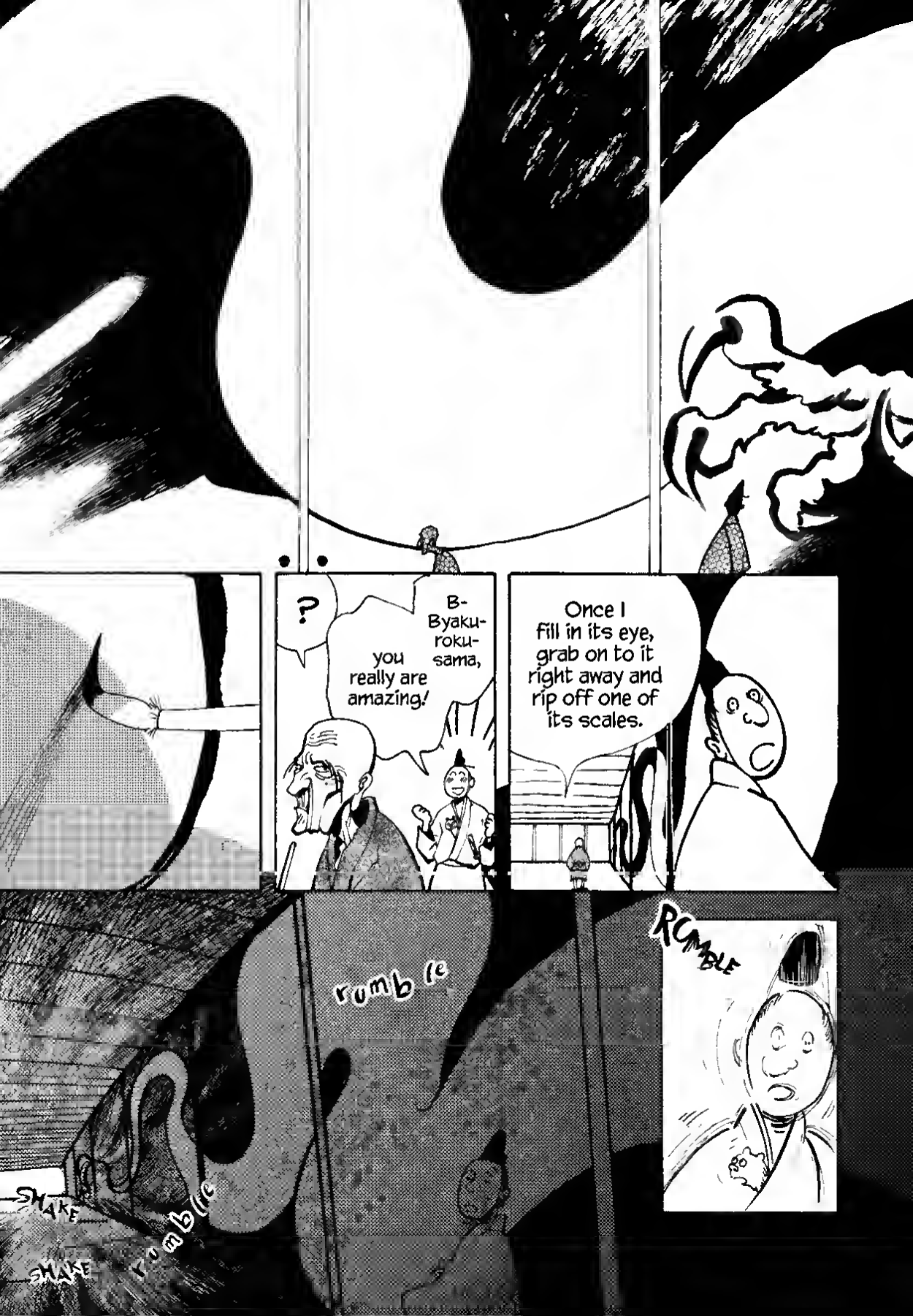

paint another one,
sell that,
and sell that.
paint something else,
If I get a good price for it I'll use that money and buy some more supplies...
I'll repaint the horse and sell that for a good price.
No, I suppose I should do the horse first.
SLUMP


I just thought that if I had a real flesh and blood body I'd be of much more use to you, Byakuroku-sama.
Uh, well, uhm...
What will you do as a human?
Please make me human.

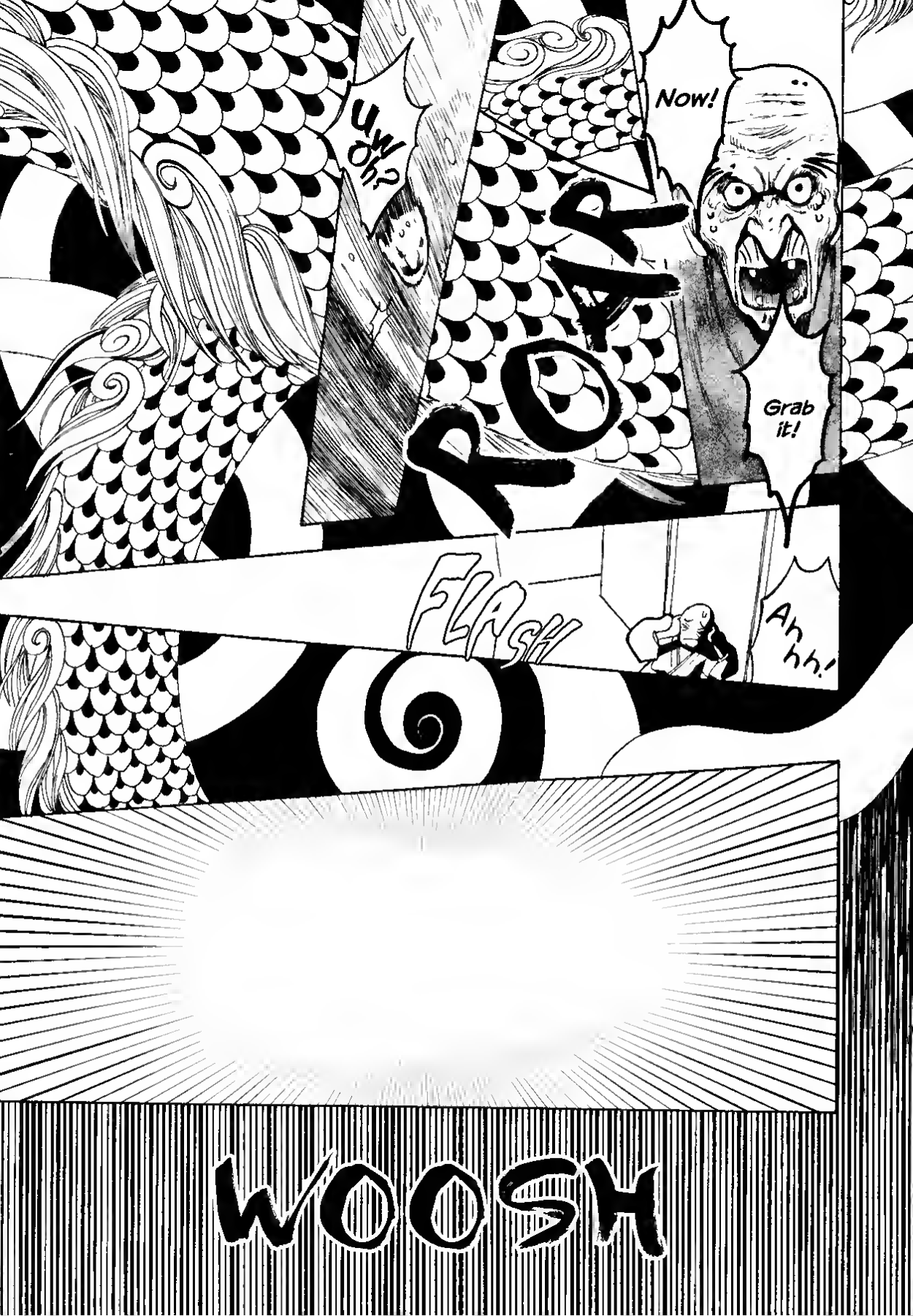

All right, I'll do my best!
Really?
I'm sure you must want to get far away from me as soon as you can.
Of course not.
What?
Well, I guess I could at least fix your kimono up.
...

Whoa!
What a huge temple!
Excuse us!
Hey you, go tell the monks that Takagawa is here!
How rude...
toss
salt
glance
Ohhh,
so it was you, Takagawa-dono.
Please forgive him.
He must've mistaken you for a beggar or something.
He's just a monk-in-training.
It's not hard to see why,
with that shabby appearance of yours.
GRR
Please come in while nobody is looking.
ARGH
YOU... VULGAR-

Stop that.
DROOP
Do you still want to become a human after seeing all that?
!
This is how human beings are.
This was how my pieces of work were all bought by people with no interest in painting.
Even if that's how it is, I still...
Okay!
O-
this is the last of my ink. Don't make any mistakes.
However,
If you get your hands on one of the dragon's scales, I'll repaint you right away.
...
I understand.


Once I fill in its eye, grab on to it right away and rip off one of its scales.
B-Byaku-roku-sama, you really are amazing!
?
RUMBLE
rumble
SHAKE
SHAKE
rumble

B-
Byaku-roku-sama, what's going...
TWIRL
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
LASH


Now!
Uh-oh?
ROAR
Grab it!
FLASH
Ahhh!
WOOSH

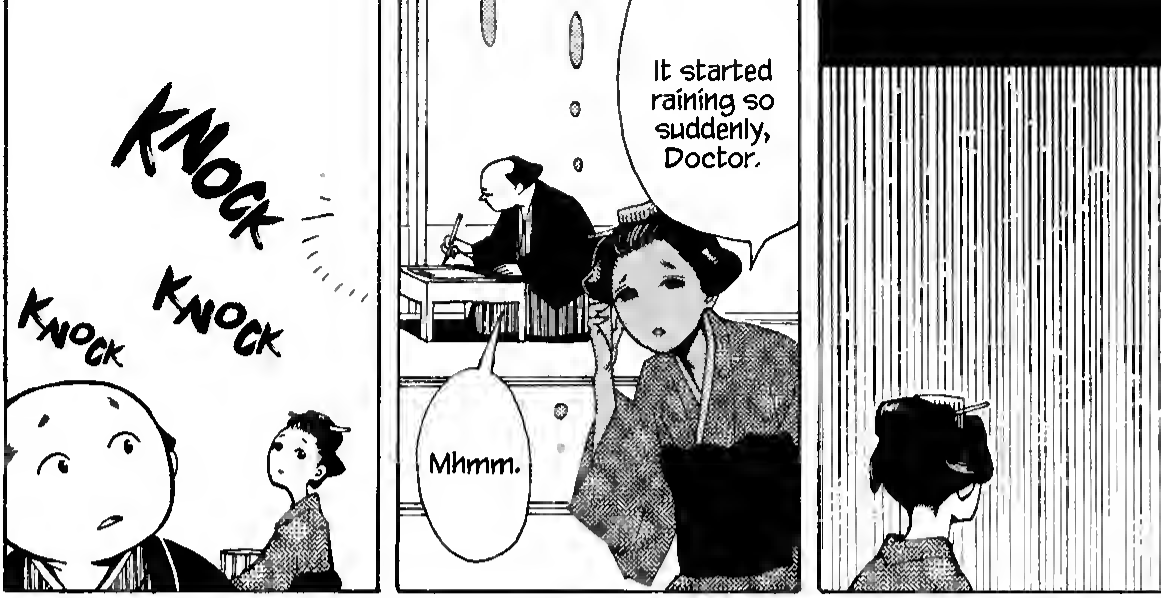
I-I did it!
Ahh!
Byakuroku-sama!
Huh
Byakuroku-sama, I've done it.
I have retrieved a scale...
W-We need to get you treated right away!
Were you struck by the lightning that the dragon called?
I must've been spared because I'm just paper...
What happened to you?
SIZZLE

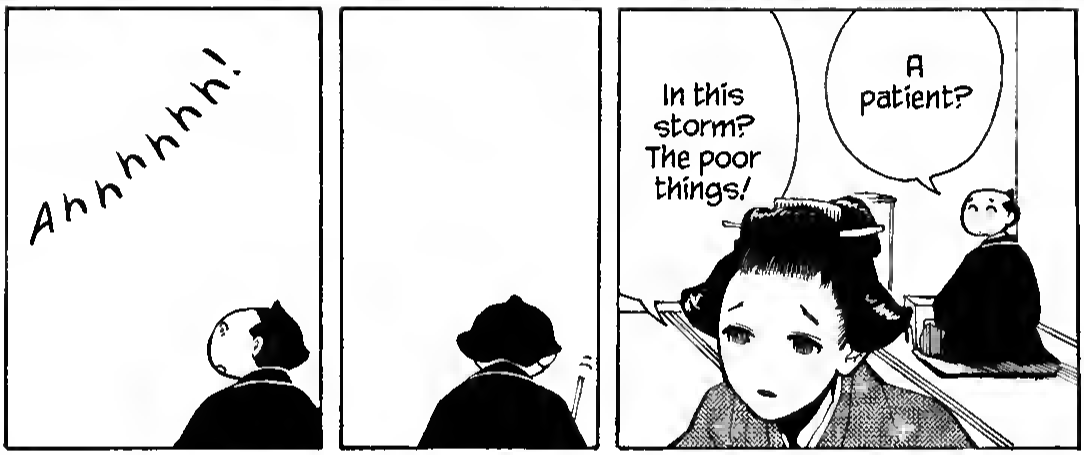
Call a doctor...
It's a fire!
Please call a doctor!
What happened just now?
Lightning struck!
There are flames on the west side!
Call a doct...
RUSH
RUSH
shove
DROOP
SLIDE
SLIDE
Come here, horsey!
he's all wet from the rain...
Panic
I see,
Oh...
splish
GRIT
...

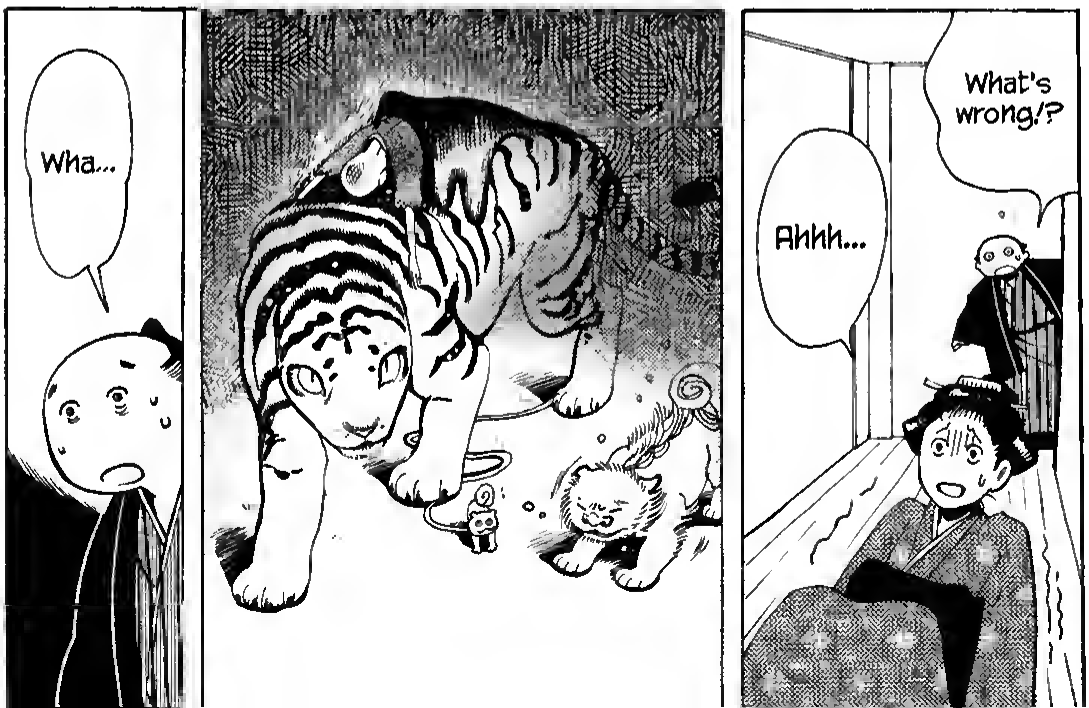
Splash
Splash
Splash
I need to find
a doctor.
Excuse me!
knock knock
SLIDE
I have someone injured with me...
Could you please treat him...?
I know!
ah!
I can use you!
How could he...
Shake
shake

sniff
sniff
sniff
WOOF
Your nose must be better than any dog's could possibly be. Find him for me!
Byakuroku-sama's son is supposed to be a doctor.
My face is all wet, so I feel so weak
Ugh!
TWIST
huff
huff
SPLASH
WHOOSH
!?
Eeek!
STARE
Some-body save...
It's the tiger!
It...
Ahh!

Meow
wobble
shove
y-
You're...
SAUNTER
SAUNTER
LEAN
huff
huff
huff
huff


KNOCK
KNOCK
KNOCK
It started raining so suddenly, Doctor.
Mhmm.


Ahhhhhh!
A patient?
In this storm? The poor things!


Wha...
What's wrong!?
Ahhh...

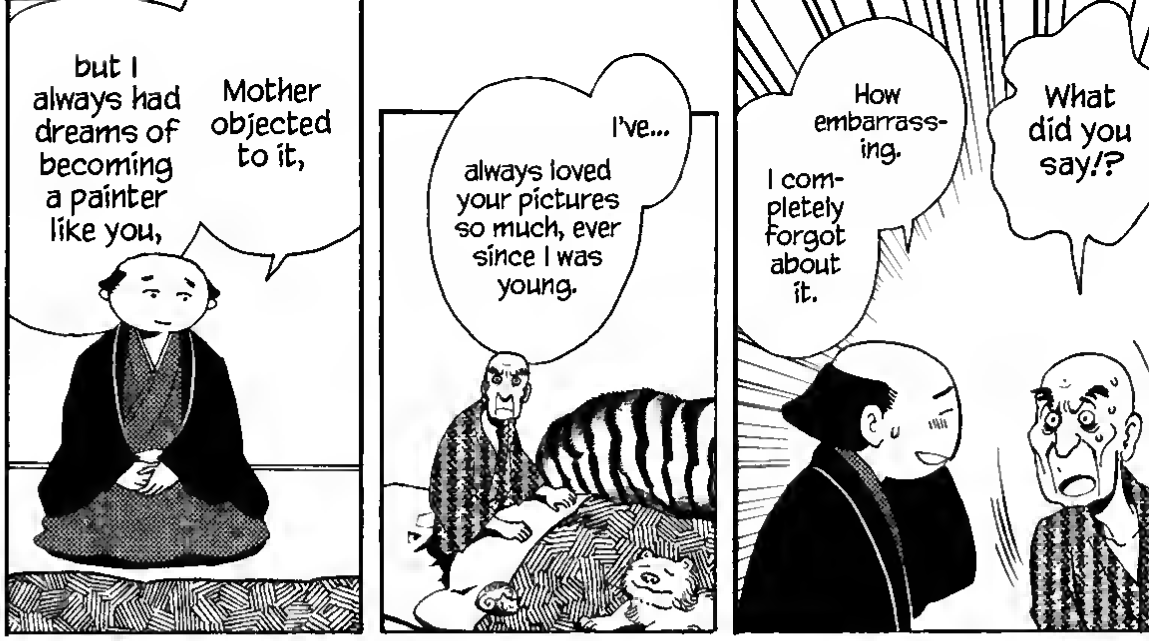
By lightning!?
I beg of you.
...
He was...
SHOCK
struck by lightning...
Please help him...
T-This tiger is...
Doctor!
Ah!
F-
Father!
A dragon scale...
What's this?
Please...
NU
Please...
I have no money, but if this will do...
B-But he's already at death's door...
GRIND
GRIND
Bring the patient to the bed...
tap
tap
tap
Doctor!
...

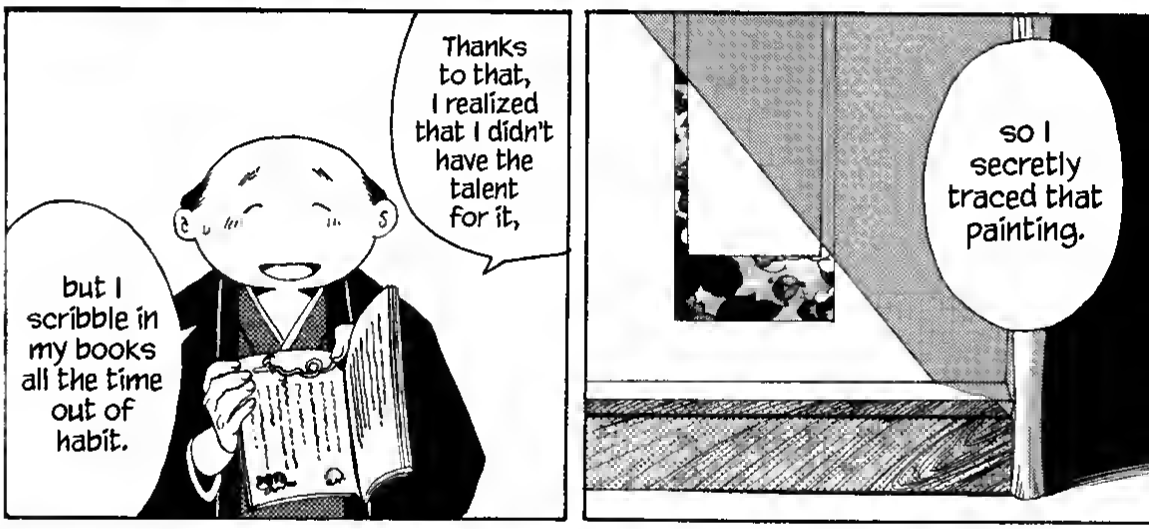
Gasp...
Please drink this, father...
Where did you find such a thing...?
Ah!
H-He's breathing!
It was real...
He's gone...
Who was that...?

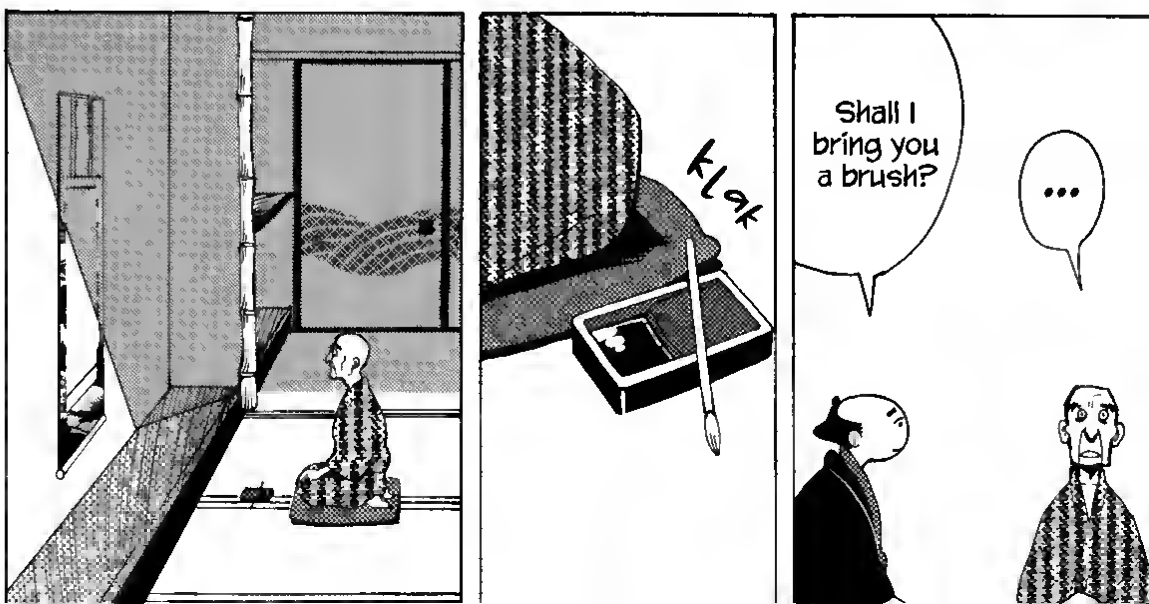
Oh!
Have you woken up?
...
I'll go call the doctor.
tap
tap
...

ЈИИР ИР

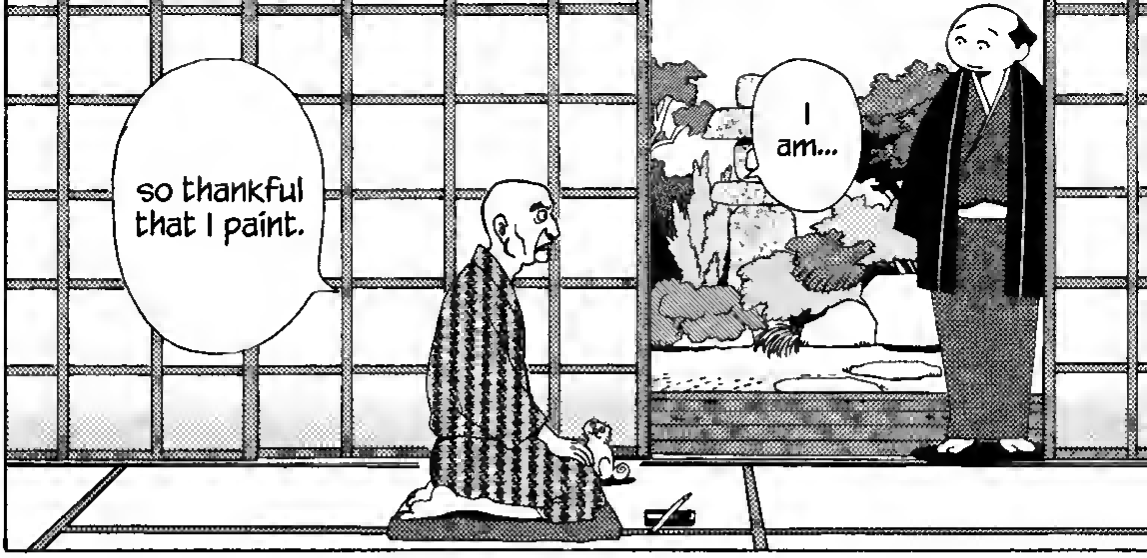
hah
hah
hah
Well, you're completely healthy.
And it looks like you're ten years younger too.
Pat
Pat
Pat
Father!
He's that painting.
Who was he?
it seems like he left right away.
After he left you with us,
That can't be.
where is that man that was with me?
No, more importantly,
What happened to me...
C-Could it be...?
Was it the picture that I painted?
That's how we got here.
A forgery?
It was in my house...
That's right.
He was a forgery of that painting that I filled in the eyes of...


but I always had dreams of becoming a painter like you,
Mother objected to it,
I've... always loved your pictures so much, ever since I was young.
How embarrassing. I completely forgot about it.
What did you say!?


but I scribble in my books all the time out of habit.
Thanks to that, I realized that I didn't have the talent for it,
so I secretly traced that painting.


klak
Shall I bring you a brush?
...

why don't you live here with me.
!
...Father, if you'd like,
It might be a bit silly to say this,
What?
This isn't that man.
...
No, I shouldn't.
klak
Was he always eager to please you, Father?
I wonder how my painting behaved.
that the paintings have brought us back together.
but I can't help but feel


so thankful that I paint.
I am...

SNIFFLE

Seven Little Sons Of the Dragon

The Sixth Story

"My Child is Adorable," Cried the Dragon

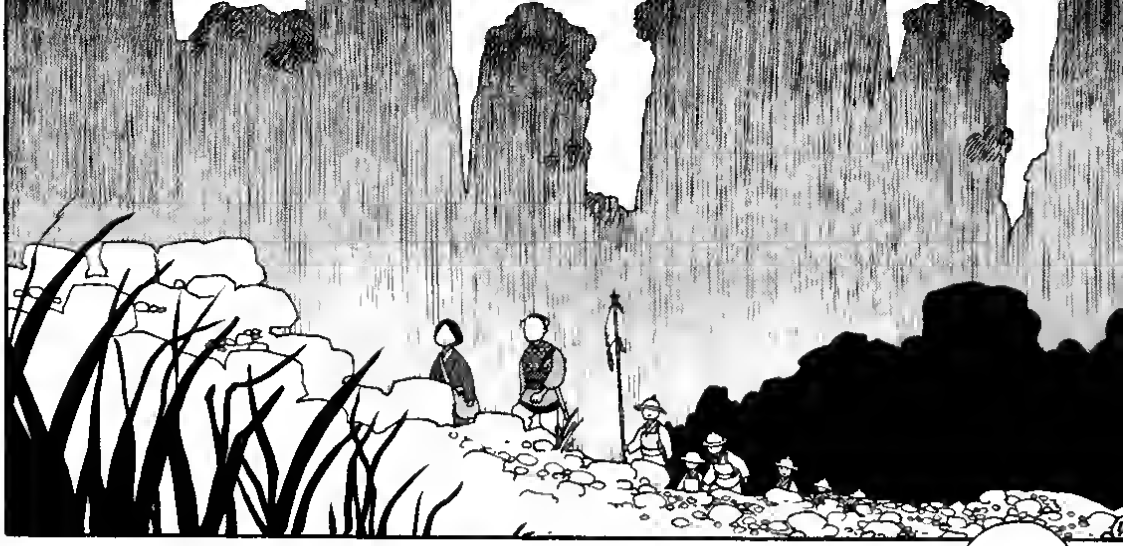
Seven Little Sons Of the Dragon
"My Child is Adorable," Cried the Dragon
The Sixth Story

What!?
One of our cows kicked your son...
I'm sorry, Yoh-san!
WAAHHH
What were you doing somewhere so danger-ous?
BONK
He was kneeling down near the cow's legs.
But, but...
What!?
rustle rustle
shriek
I did it for you, Mommy...
You've had this scary look on your face recently, so...
...
The flower that you like bloomed...
....!
TA DA

For my father, the king!
BLINK
-this is for him!
...
for me...
It was for me?
It was...
Are there no brave men here?
That is why I've come!
He's trying to get someone to guide him up the dragon's mountain.
It's Prince Shun.
Oh, Yoh-san.
What's all the fuss?
You shall be rewarded handsomely!

He's going on about how he has to get a dragon scale so he can cure the king's sickness...
Even if you're lucky enough to get your hand on one of the dragon's scales,
There's no guarantee that you won't get stabbed in the back on the way back.
How ridiculous.
He's only going to get himself killed.
"I did it for you, mommy...
I ask of you! Please lend me your strength!
For my father, the king, who lies sick...
...I will go with you.

Yoh-san...
Thank you for being so kind to a wanderer like me, even though you knew nothing about me.
Yoh-san...
I can't rely on you and the other villagers' kindness forever.
My name is Yoh.
I appreciate your assistance!
My name is Shun.

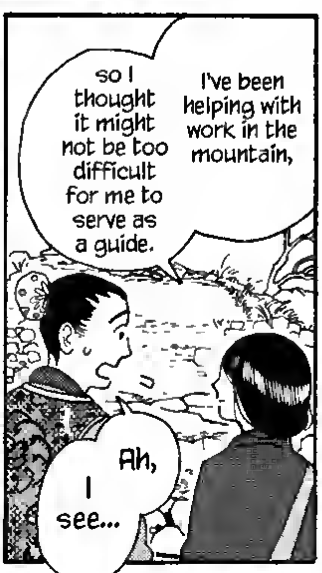


Yes.
My husband and child passed away some years ago in an accident,
I was going to impose on some distant relatives of mine, and on my way to them, I found myself here.

It seems like you're not from that village...?
I'm sorry,
but I overheard you talking to the other villagers.

my son always went overboard trying to make me happy.
I see that side of him once more in you, Prince Shun.

It may be rude of me
to say something like this,


I've been helping with work in the mountain,
so I thought it might not be too difficult for me to serve as a guide.
Ah, I see...

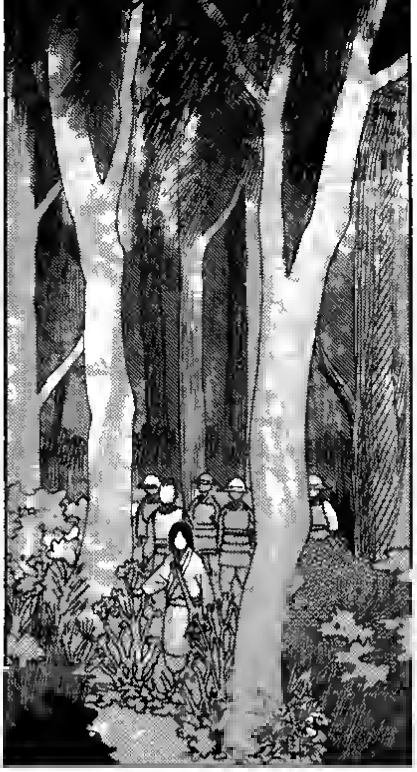
Your son must've been blessed to have you for a mother.
Even when I think of her now, my memories are all of how kind and warm she was.
M-My... mother died when I was young.
...

gulp

Yeah!
I'll be careful!
If something were to happen to you,
it would surely make the king extremely sad.
...Prince Shun,
please make sure you don't overdo it either.

The prince always did have a ridiculous amount of stamina,
but that woman's got some strong legs on her as well.
Yeah, absolutely.
gasp
pant
gasp
gasp
gasp
ROOAAAR...
Don't stray from my side.
Around here the mountain is much more dangerous than the dragon.
Her nest is still further ahead.
She's making her voice echo through the mountains to throw off her position.
Is that the dragon howling?

Ugh
Ungh



My foot got caught in the thicket, that's all.
We must treat that immediately!

Ah!
Ow!

RIP

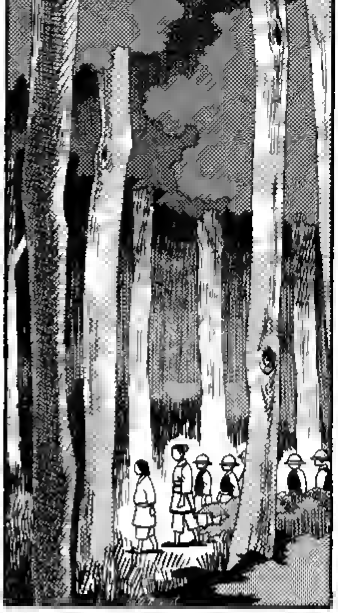
This is just something to help with it for now, but it's better than nothing at all.
The thorns here are poisonous.

rustle

It's cold
What's that?
spread

Hey,
you've got a cut on your cheek too.

It's swelling up.
Oh no...



You're such an idiot.
Oh, yeah
It didn't hurt at all so I didn't notice it.
...?

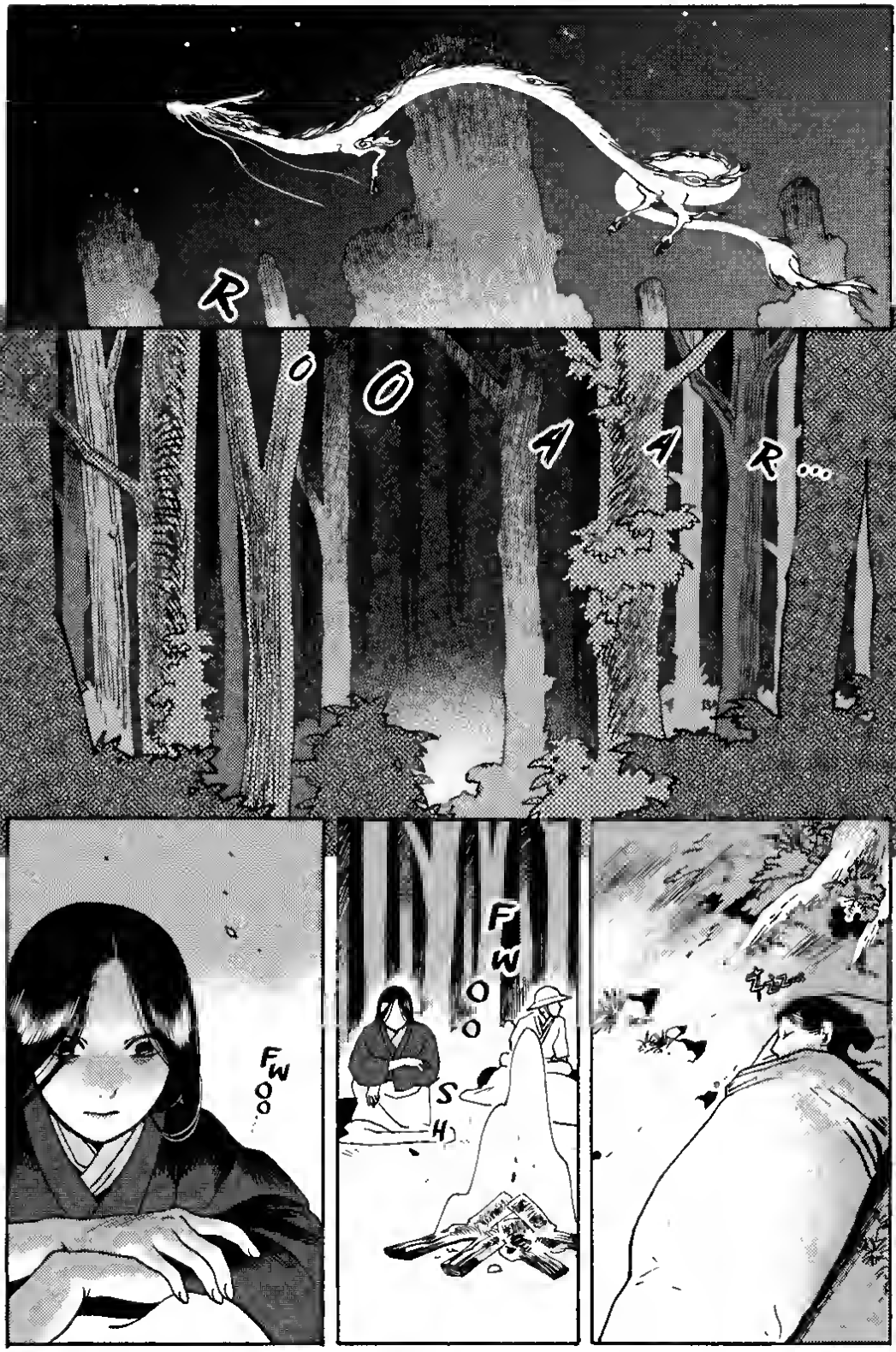
I must have a fever.
Her hand feels so cool.

GRAB

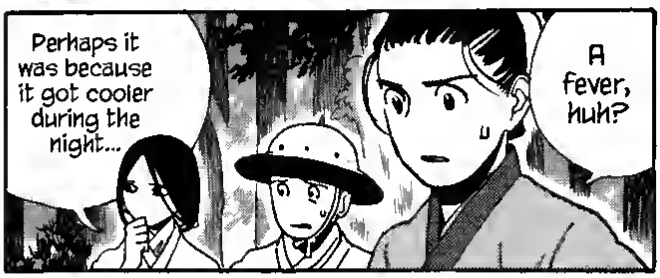
Let's walk a little further and prepare to make camp.
The sun will set soon.

sigh
ROOAAR...
You have some too, prince.
Oh, thank you.
So dragons lay eggs too.
Yes.
Once the egg hatches, they take their child down south.
Right now is when they lay their eggs...
She might be a bit riled up about that.
Doesn't the dragon go to sleep?
TAIN

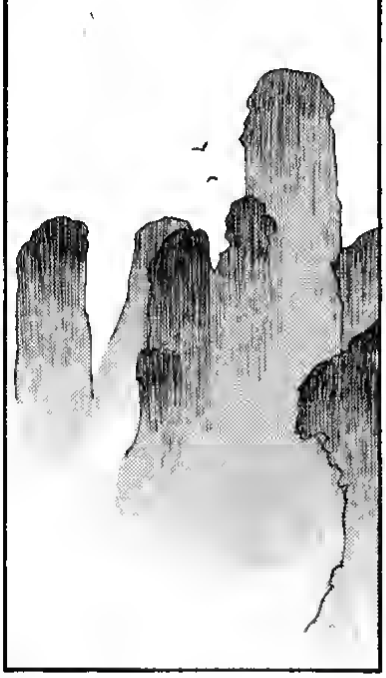
That's how precious a child can be to a parent.
But then what's the point of it all?
There are even dragons that die from it.
They don't eat or drink while protecting their eggs.
What?
Thank you very much!
If we can get our hands on the dragon's scale, I'll reward you greatly.
Yoh-dono, you aren't planning to go back to that village anymore, are you?
No, I'm not...
I figure I'll start my trip to find my relatives back up again.
What a mysterious person.


R
O
O
A
A
R...
FWOO...
FWOOO
SH...

ughh
ughh
ga-sp ga-sp


Perhaps it was because it got cooler during the night...
A fever, huh?

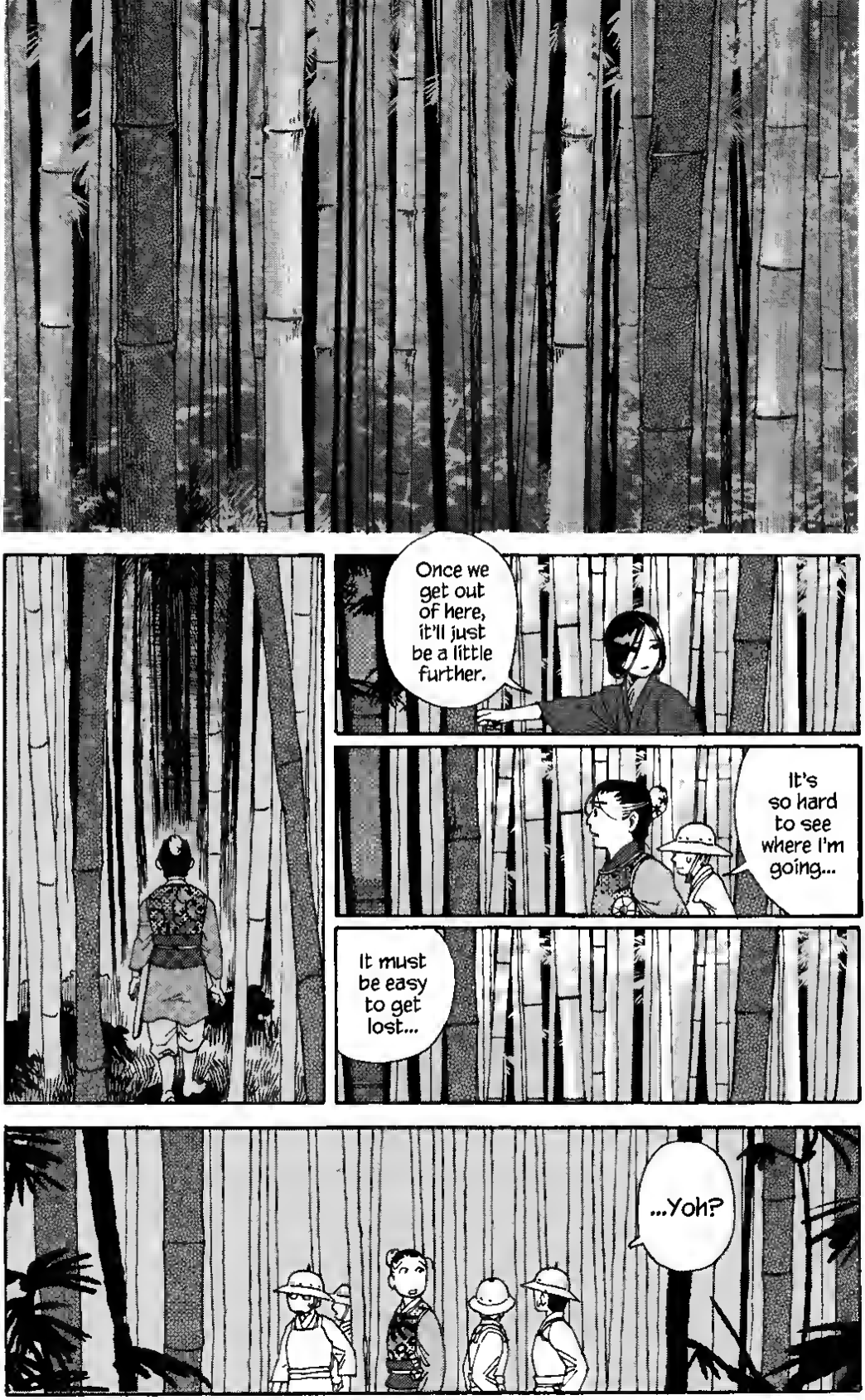
We've got no other choice!
Hrmmm



...

The king's condition is dire!
Perhaps we should turn back and...
We can't delay for even a moment.

You men take the sick back to the village!
We'll continue with what we have left and try to make it to the summit!


Once we get out of here, it'll just be a little further.
It's so hard to see where I'm going...
It must be easy to get lost...
...Yoh?

Prince!
Hold on a moment!
Where did she go?
Yoh...
Yoh!
Please wait!
Heeeey!

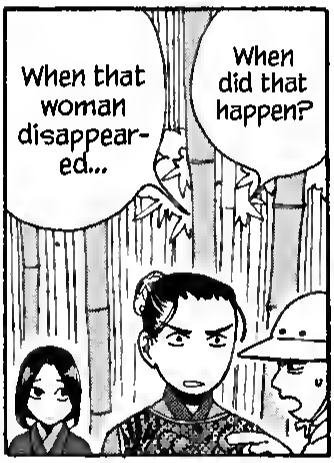
The damn lech.
tch
She's not that kind of woman!
Don't be ridiculous!
I'm sure there's something suspicious about her.
She must be planning something...

drag...
drag...
!?
GRAB
Urk...
SQUEEZE
This was an absurd plan from the very beginning.
Capturing a dragon...? I just want to hurry up and go back to the capital.
sneak

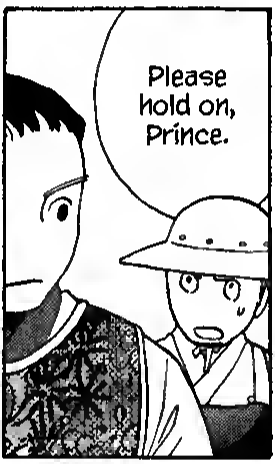
Please make sure you don't leave my side.
Even the villagers get lost here easily.
Sorry.

Yoh!
Oh, thank goodness.

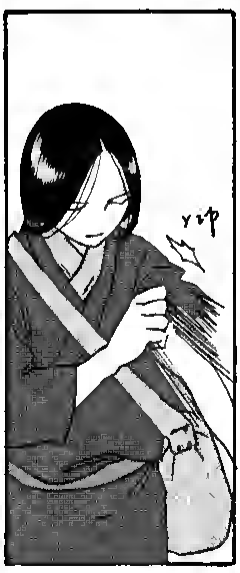
Prince ...?
Prince Shun!

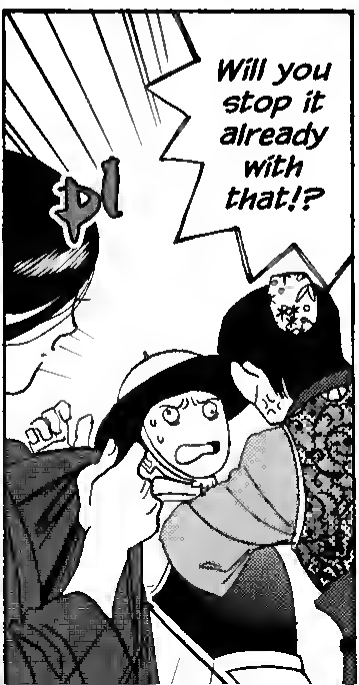

When that woman disappeared...
When did that happen?

...One of the soldiers is nowhere to be found.
What is it this time?


Please hold on, Prince.

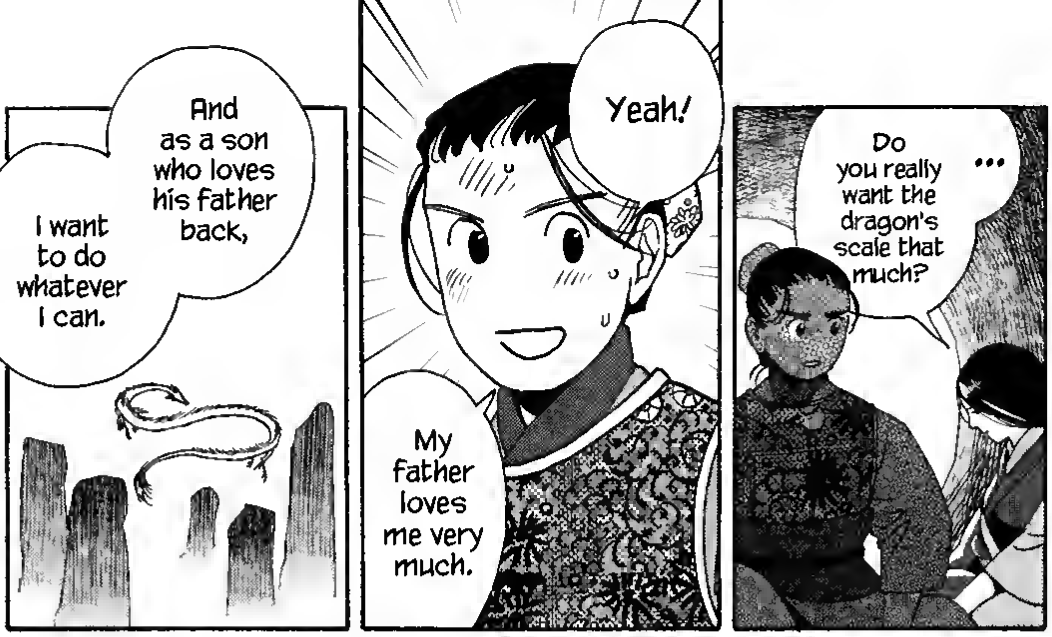
Let's continue on and mark where we're going with cloth strips.
...
We should be able to meet up with anyone who gets lost later that way.


Yup

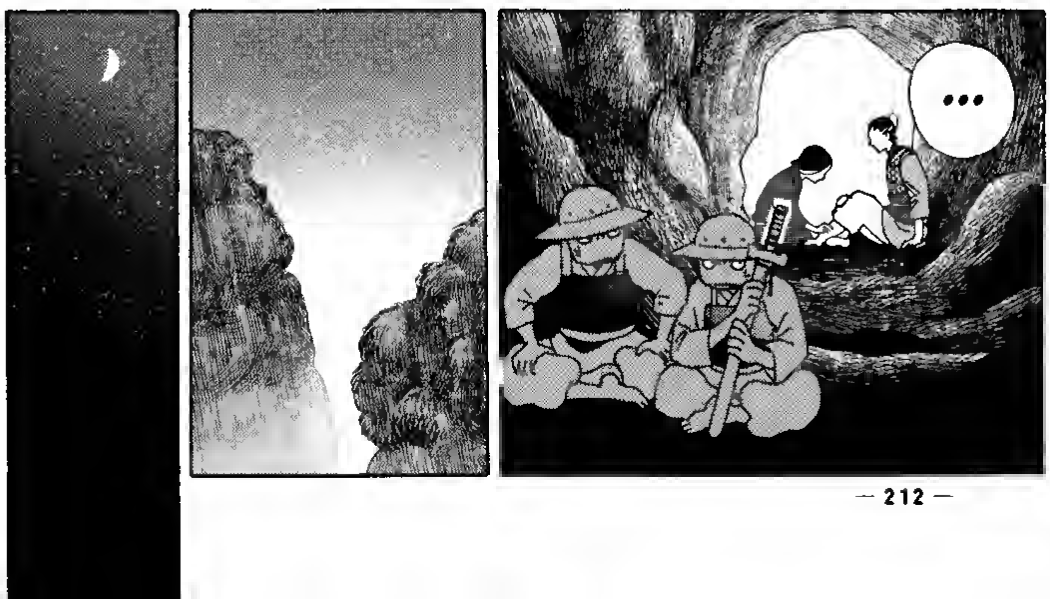

Will you stop it already with that!?

The dragon's nest is around here.
Eeeek...
Is she some sort of spirit or something...!?
That woman...
ROAR...
Ah!
It's the dragon!
Be careful!!
grab
!!
Grab on tight and keep close!

twirl
AGHH
A
AAHH
Hurry! Inside this hole!
Thank you.
You saved my life...
Please return to the capital.
Prince, this is too much...
...
I've come too far to back down now.
ROOOAAAR


And as a son who loves his father back,
I want to do whatever I can.
Yeah!
My father loves me very much.
Do you really want the dragon's scale that much?
...

...Please show me the wound on your leg.
...
I'll change the dressing.
I'll make sure to be careful that doesn't happen!
that would cause the king much more pain than if he were to die himself.
But if the prince dies...

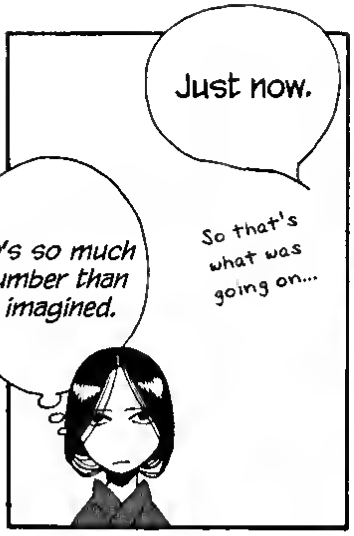

...

nod
nod
That woman's definitely up to something!
I've run out of patience...
Hrm...
Let's interrogate her...
Eeek!
Don't move, stay still!
What are you scheming at, woman!?
Stop ...
What are you after...?
you...
TUG

!?
I've seen this tattoo somewhere before...
I'm sure it's...
Yeah,
It was the mark of one of the groups of assassins ...!
TWIRL
WHUMP
You were planning to assassinate the prince from the very beginning...!?
W-Who's paying you for this!?
This is revenge...
for my son who was killed by the king.
UWAAAAA

I finally have the prince by himself.
The moment that I've been waiting for all these years is in the palm of my hand!
heh
heh
Now then, how shall I proceed?
Or should I cut him into tiny bits and pieces
and scatter each one all across the kingdom?
Shall I make him taste all the flavors of pain that exist, so he dies with his face warped with terror, and send his head to the king?

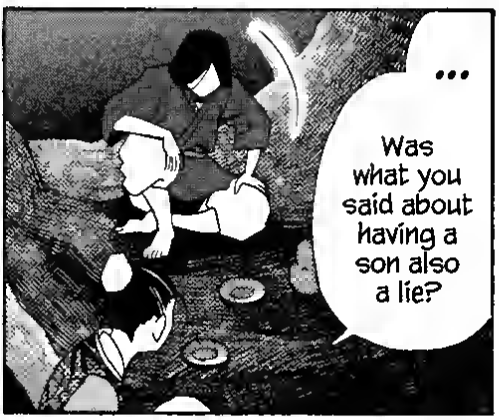
...They said that they could not follow you any further,
and went down the mountain.
...
Where are the soldiers?
...I have...
a single request for you.
rub
rub
I see.
You can do whatever you want with me, I don't care.
If I can get my hands on the dragon's scale,
I want you to hand it over to the soldiers in the village.


Just now.
He's so much dumber than I imagined.
So that's what was going on...

When did you figure out that I'm an assassin?

...No.

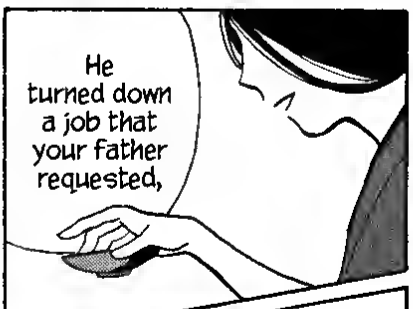
fwump
blub
blub


...
Was what you said about having a son also a lie?

I was so mad that I thought I was crazy.

That was when I decided,
that I would make that bastard taste the same suffering that I did.

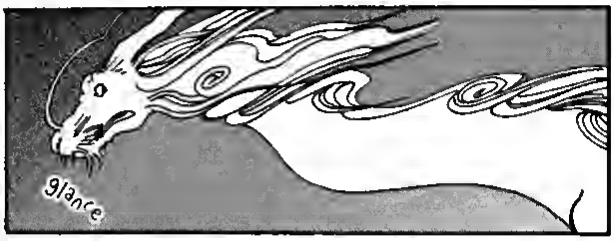
CRASH

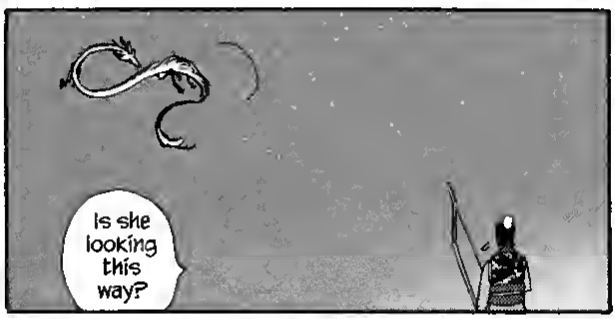

He turned down a job that your father requested,

and he was killed to teach everyone a lesson.

I'm going to send him your head.
and guessed that his son was sure to come seeking the dragon's scale.
I heard that he collapsed and was seriously ill,
The king will suffer a fate worse than his own death.
Ahh, this feels so good...
CRAWL
CRAWL
CRAWL
I'm going to bring back the dragon's scale.
That poison I put on your leg must sting.
Where are you going?

It's point-less.
Dragons rarely come close to the ground.


glance


Is she looking this way?

No good.
fwoosh

stretch

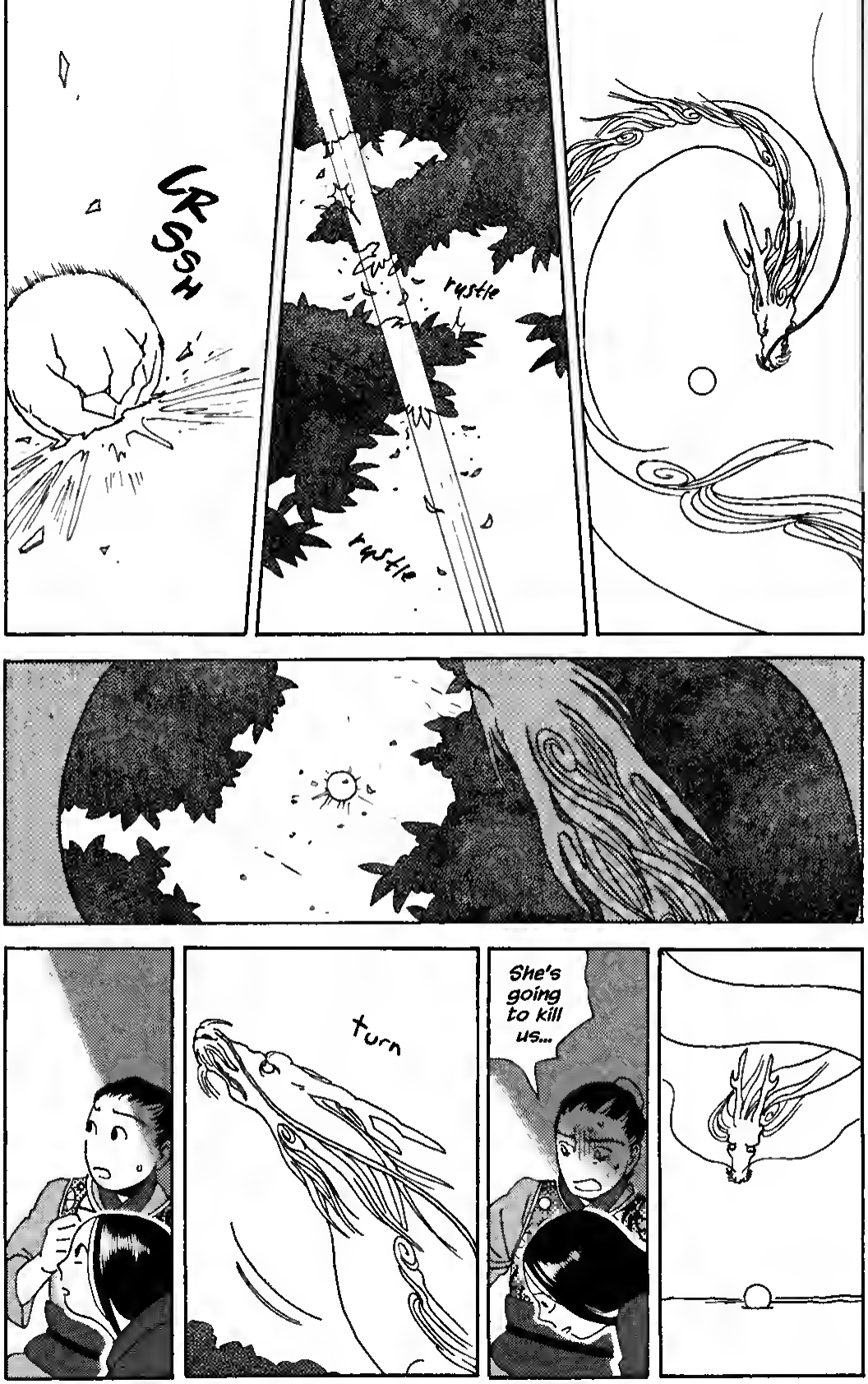
But a dragon's just like any other animal...
There must be a moment when it's close to the ground.
When it's eating... or drinking...?
No, that won't work.
They don't eat or drink while protecting their eggs.
Ah...
It's laid an egg.
...
I know!
When we were crossing that cliff...
Can I kill him already?
It came that close to us for a reason!
It must have been trying to protect something.

Hm?
It's the dragon's nest...!
There!
Over there...!
If you refuse, I'll jump off this mountain,
and you won't be able to enjoy sending my head to the king.
You...
Help me, Yoh!
I'm going to slip inside that nest and ambush the dragon!
How stupid can you be...?
The dragon's nest!?
What are you...

CHOMP
WHOOOOOSH
It seems like it's really angry!
What do we do now?
We're definitely gonna die!
I see. It's desperate to protect its child,
but my father's life depends on this.
...!

GRRRRR
SCRATCH
SCRATCH
SCRATCH
SWISH
SWISH
ROAR
SHIVER
Hey!
ROLL
W-W-W-What are you doing!?
If we use the egg as a shield, he won't be able to swing at us.
How is it even human to do something like use a child as a shield?
I'm just borrowing it, I'm not going to hurt it.
GRAB
Stop that!!
Don't touch it!

AH!
Oh...
my god!
How...


URSSH
rustle
rustle
turn
She's going to kill us...

How could this be...!?

F-Father!

She'll fight tooth and claw to protect her egg while it's alive,

but nothing will come from troubling herself over a broken egg...

...Because it's pointless.

It left... W-Why!?

So dragons are nothing more than beasts after all.

There's ...

no way a child could possibly rest in peace after that!

This is so vexing...

Damn it...

Wahh

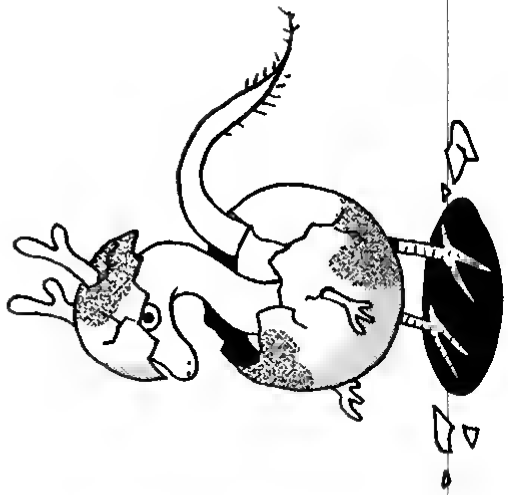
Father ...!!

If I don't take my revenge, I'll be no better than an animal!
But I'll still be taking your head!
GRAB
...You'll either die trying to get down the mountain with that leg of yours,
or die here by yourself, thinking of your father.
WHOOSH
Hmph...
clatter

AH!!
It's that woman!
How dare you! You made us look like fools!
Where are you...?
Eeek...
Prince...?
Prince Shun?
Hmph.
No you
Stop pushing
Hey!
Heeey! I'm over here...
I-
It's the prince!!
He's alive!
W-
Wait!
WHOOSH

possibly face my father...?
How can I...
Sniff...
Prince.
That's not true at all.
I wasn't able to get my hands on one of the dragon's scales...
Prince Shun!
...
The fact that you'll be coming home with your life intact is the most important thing you could bring back.
Hmm?
A scale?
P-
Prince! Prince!!
It's got all sorts of strange things in it...
All sorts of bones, skins, and even something that looks like a fish scale...
But this dragon's nest
...
gulp

At the very least I should see to it that this gets a proper burial.
wobble
wobble
wobble
Oo
Scrch
scrch
scrch.
Wahh!
No, I'm worse than a beast.
I didn't take revenge for my child. I'm nothing more than a beast...
I guess we'll be going on a trip to find some friends of yours.
Oh well.
I'm not your mother...
W-Whoa! Hold on!
Wahh!
lick
lick
Sigh



Seven Little Sons Of the Dragon

The Seventh Story

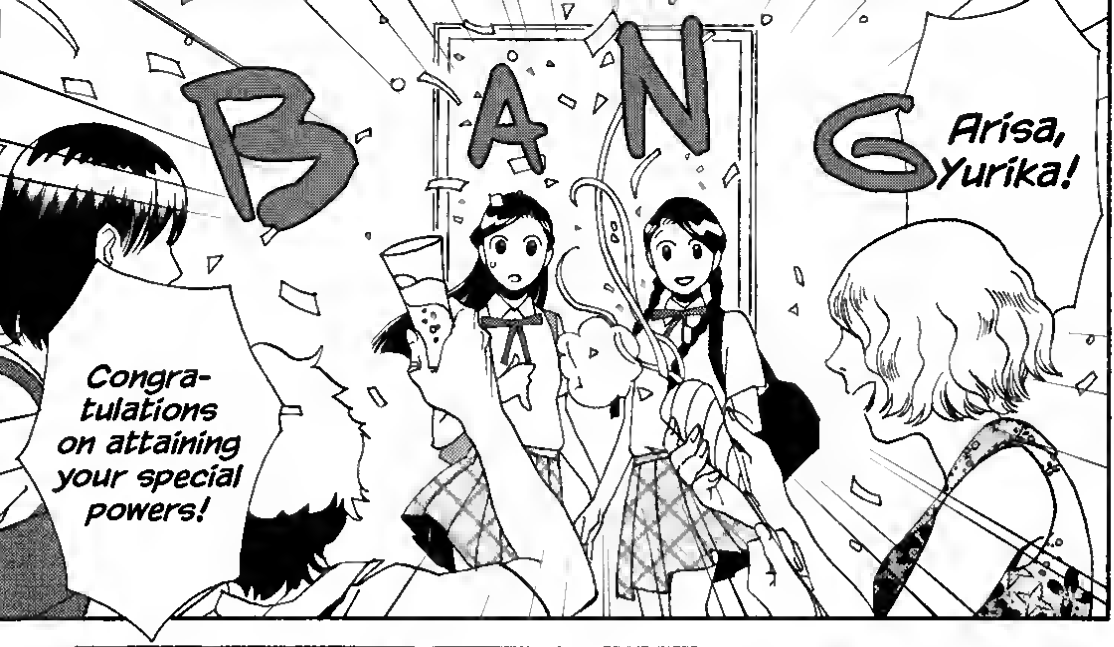
The Members of the Inutani Household

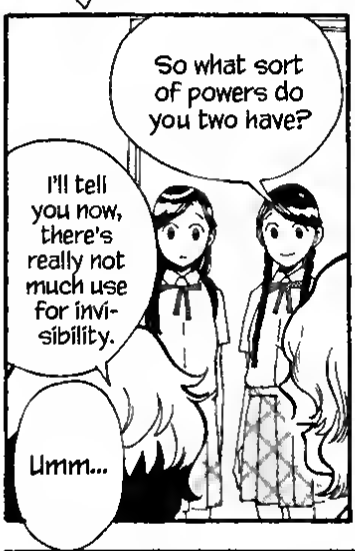
I'm Inutani Arisa.
Arisa, hurry up, the bus is here!
That's my twin and older sister, Yurika.
We're your average high school students.
If we didn't make this one, we would've had to wait an hour for the next one.
But you can just bend the dimensions and get back earlier.
But Gramps is always flying around whenever he wants.
They told us not to use our powers in front of people!
I can't do that
The only difference is...
Welcome back
our Inutani household
is a family that has special powers.
Grampa's flying in the sky again

Seven Little Sons Of the Dragon

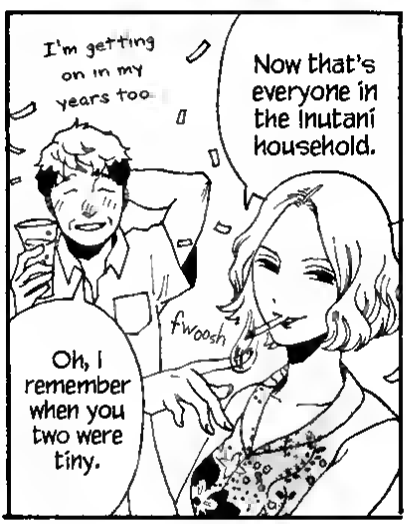
The Seventh Story

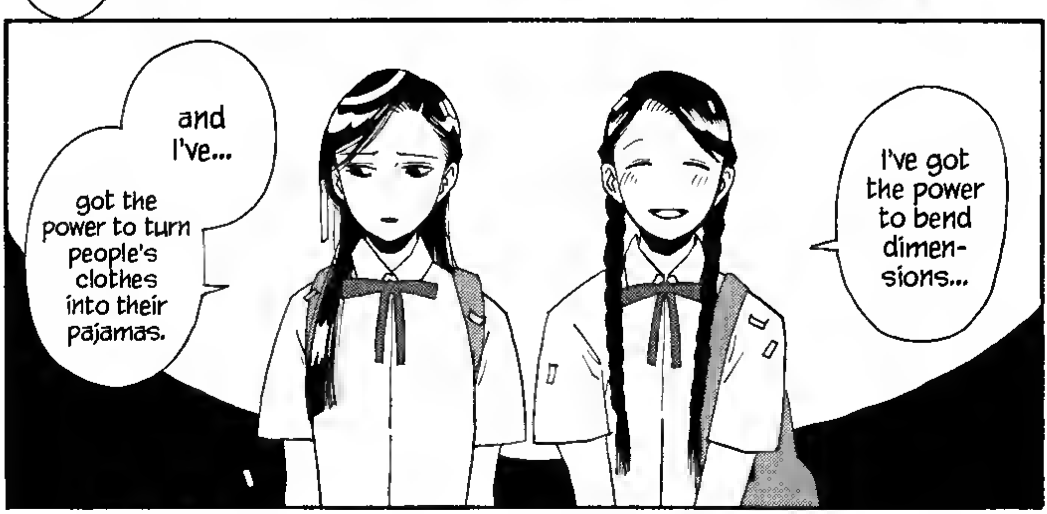
The Members of the Inutani Household

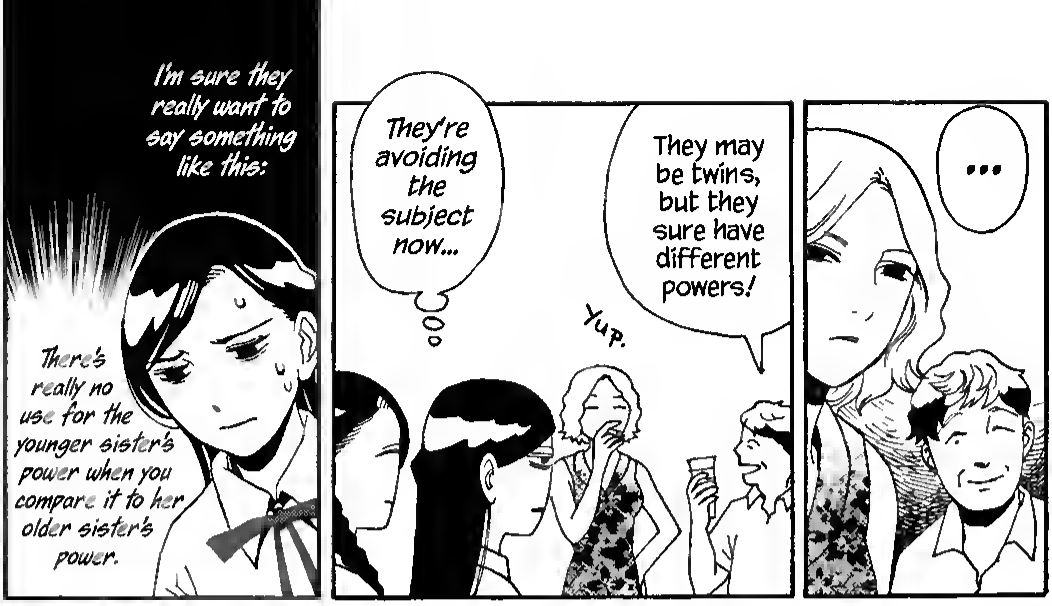

BANG
Arisa, Yurika!
Congratulations on attaining your special powers!

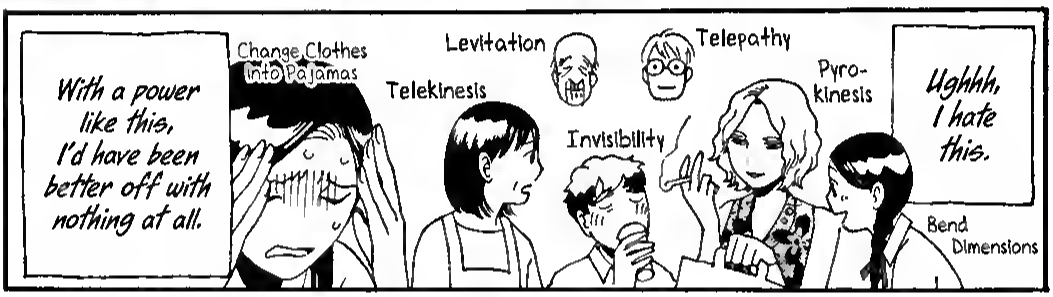

So what sort of powers do you two have?
I'll tell you now, there's really not much use for invisibility.
Umm...

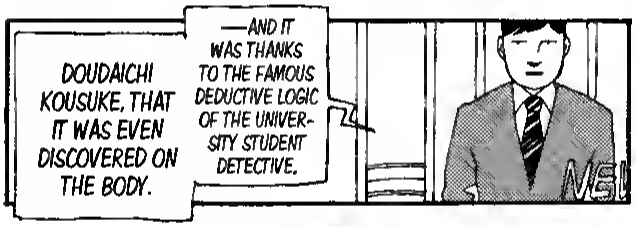
Thank you aunt Masako,
and uncle Kazutoshi.


I'm getting on in my years too
Now that's everyone in the Inutani household.
fwoosh
Oh, I remember when you two were tiny.


and I've...
got the power to turn people's clothes into their pajamas.
I've got the power to bend dimensions...


I'm sure they really want to say something like this:
There's really no use for the younger sister's power when you compare it to her older sister's power.
They're avoiding the subject now...
They may be twins, but they sure have different powers!
Yup.
...

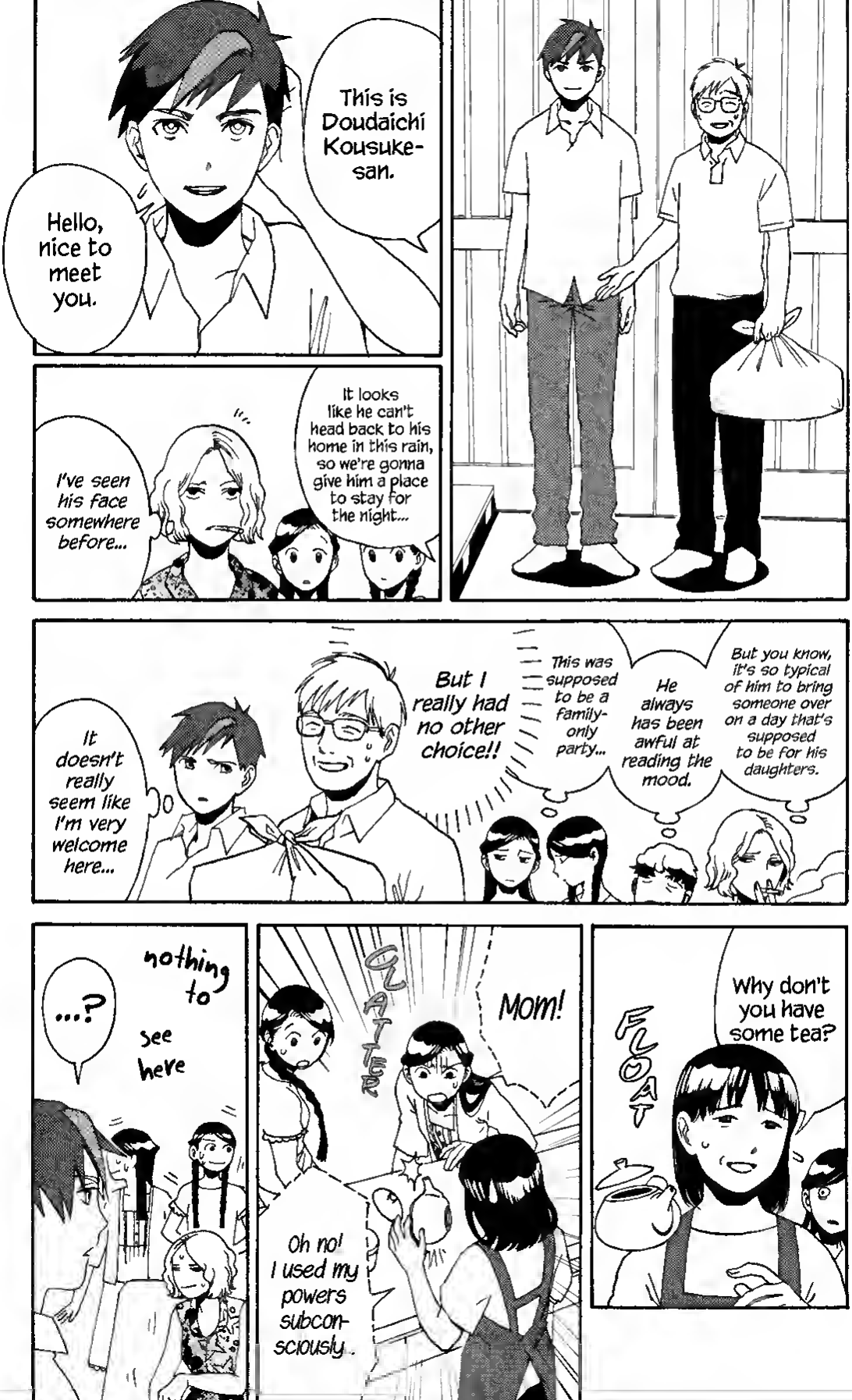

With a power like this, I'd have been better off with nothing at all.
Change Clothes into Pajamas
Levitation
Telekinesis
Telepathy
Pyro-kinesis
Invisibility
Ughhh, I hate this.
Bend Dimensions


DOUDAICHI KOUSUKE, THAT IT WAS EVEN DISCOVERED ON THE BODY.
—AND IT WAS THANKS TO THE FAMOUS DEDUCTIVE LOGIC OF THE UNIVERSITY STUDENT DETECTIVE.

You girls be careful not to use your powers in front of anyone.
It's been pretty dangerous recently. I'm a bit worried.

Oh! It's a telepathic message from papa!
Can everyone hear me?
There aren't any times where I'd use it!
I'm on my way home right now, but things have gotten a little complicated.
Okaaay.

...You know, even with everything going on, your dad's pretty late.
It's started raining so maybe things are at a standstill.


This is Doudaichi Kousuke-san.
Hello, nice to meet you.
It looks like he can't head back to his home in this rain, so we're gonna give him a place to stay for the night...
I've seen his face somewhere before...
It doesn't really seem like I'm very welcome here...
But I really had no other choice!!
This was supposed to be a family-only party...
He always has been awful at reading the mood.
But you know, it's so typical of him to bring someone over on a day that's supposed to be for his daughters.
Why don't you have some tea?
FLOAT
Mom!
GLASS
Oh no! I used my powers subconsciously.
...?
nothing to see here

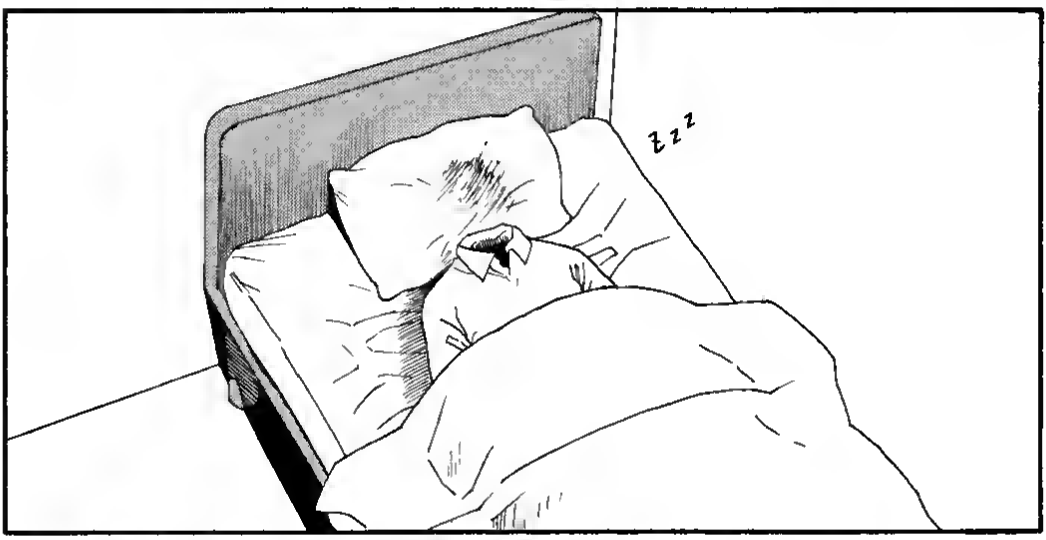
Okaaaay
Go call grampa for me.
He's probably up on the roof taking care of the bonzai trees...
That took a bit of time
Okay, dinner's ready, everyone.
AHHHHH
I'll go explain what's going on to him.
Grampa's using his levitation!
Gram-pa!
FWSSH
Gram-pa fell!
He fell!!

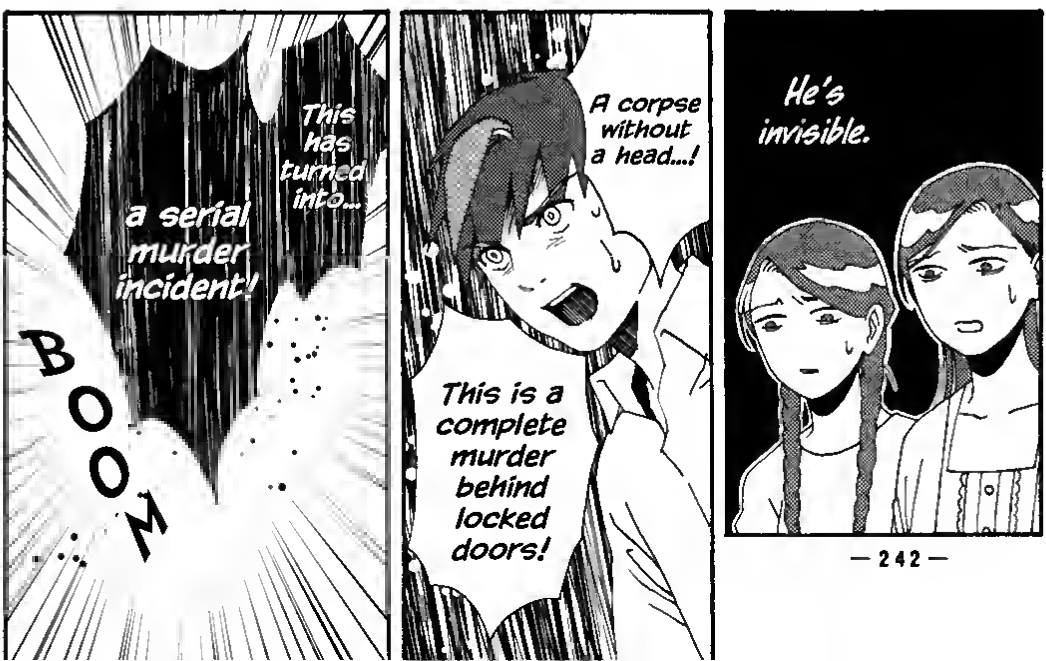
tap
tap
tap
Ahh!
play dead!!
SHOVE
AHHH!
Oh no!
Yurika!?
There's no time to explain! For the time being you're just gonna have to-
a text-book case of mur-der!
!!?
He must've lost his footing
Did he lose his footing on the roof from the rain?
No...
This is...
WAHHHH
Gram-paaaa!

No!!
SNIP
Not the police...!
Now I remember.
He's that famous university student detective.
Detect-ive...!?
We've got to call the police!
DASH
The po-lice!?
This has turned into a real mess...
Ahhh...
The telephone line... has been cut...
Excuse me!
Is everyone that is in this house present right here?
We've got to call our cousin Maa-kun. He can manipulate memories...
What are we going to do now?
No we can't!!
Maa-kun is in Hokkaido studying for his entrance examina-tions!
So this must've happened here...
He's started to try and figure things out.

He was pretty drunk. He might be sleeping in one of the rooms.
...
Uncle Kazutoshi isn't here.
You're right.
Huh...?
O-Oh, I think so...
...
Ah!
Wake up!
Uncle Kazu-toshi?
KNOCK KNOCK
EH!?
The culprit might be hiding somewhere so he's in even more danger!
We have to wake him up...!
HERE WE GO!
We have to break down the door!
EH!?
Uncle!
He's not respond-ing.
The door's locked, so I don't think there's anything to worry about...

EEE
BW
OOM


Zzz


He's invisible.
A corpse without a head...!
This is a complete murder behind locked doors!
This has turned into...
a serial murder incident!
BOOM

tick
tick
tick
This is the first time I've ever had to use a lighter.
Oh, right...
Urgh, I can't get it to work...
KL IK
KL IK
KL...
This is getting out of hand...
Auntie, use a lighter, here!
BOOO
SH
He's having a tough time...
And it was right before my very eyes...
Urgh...!
Go burn outside the house!
Now a third murder has occurred...!
Is this a joke or some-thing?
Eek!
Auntie!!
...

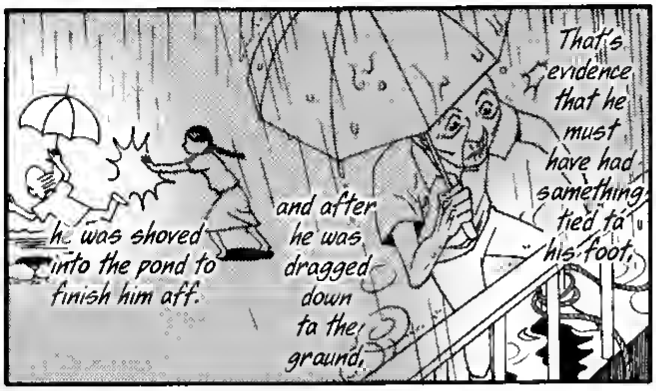
I...
Is there some way that we can get him to go home without a fuss?
This has gotten so trouble-some.
zzz
I'll just use my power and blow him far away...
No.
Then it'll really turn into a murder.
HELLO, THIS IS GOD, PLEASE STOP TRYING TO FIGURE THIS OUT.
I should just use my telepathy and make it seem like the voice of God...
No, at best, that'll just pass for ventrilo-quism.
Stop that
I can try to bend dimensions and send him somewhere far away...
What are you going to do if he gets stuck in one of the dimen-sions?
swsh
swsh
swsh
My special powers aren't good for anything anyways.
They aren't even asking me...
all alone

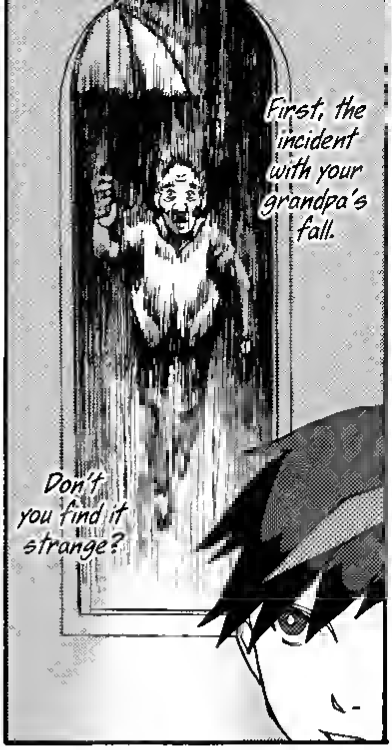
swish
swish
What is he even doing...?
swish
swish
swish
Why is he trying so hard?
It's not like we asked him to or anything.
He should just leave this to the police.
Why...?
He can't.
His deductions may not be correct,
but he's doing what he can to the best of his ability.
He knows very well what he is capable of.
SKRUH
SKRUH
Stop that
And he believes that he should use his powers when they should be used.
That's because he understands that this is what his ability is.
Papa.
Papa...
And Papa believes...
that is the right thing to do.
I told you not to peek into my head, didn't I!?
You're the worst!

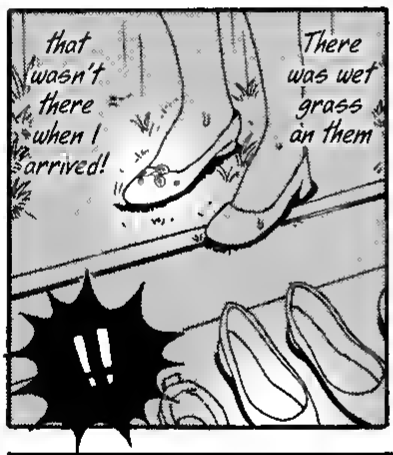
everyone.
...Thank you
for gathering here,
THUD
Wife of the Eldest Son:
Inutani Haruko
THUD
Second Son:
Inutani Kazutoshi
THUD
Eldest Son:
Inutani Masakazu
THUD
Head of the Family
Inutani Gonzou
THUD!!!
Detective
Doudaichi Kousuke
THUD
Granddaughter:
Inutani Yurika
THUD
Granddaughter:
Inutani Arisa
THUD
The Eldest Daughter:
Inutani Masako
The culprit...
is one of these people!

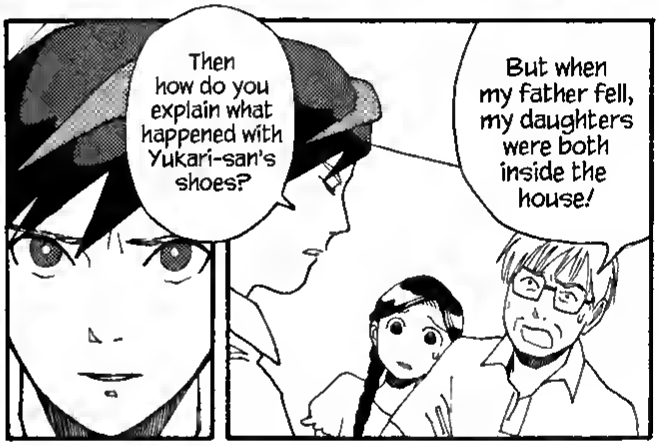
Arisa-san, Yukari-san,
it's you two.
...
The culprit is...
SERIOUS
ARE YOU
Or, to be exact,
you have one more daughter,
am I correct...?
No, we don't.

but his head was plunged in the pond.
It looked like he was dragged straight down when he fell.

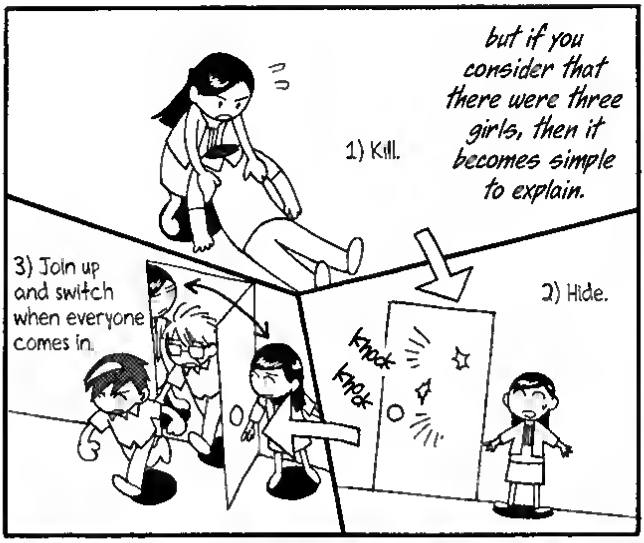

he was shoved into the pond to finish him off.
and after he was dragged down ta the graund,
That's evidence that he must have had something tied ta his foot.

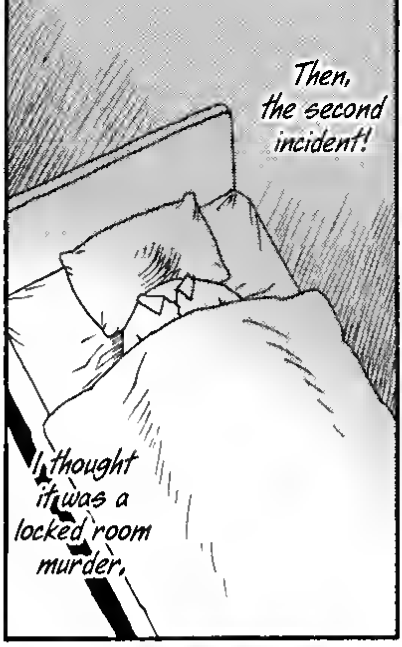

First, the incident with your grandpa's fall.
Don't you find it strange?

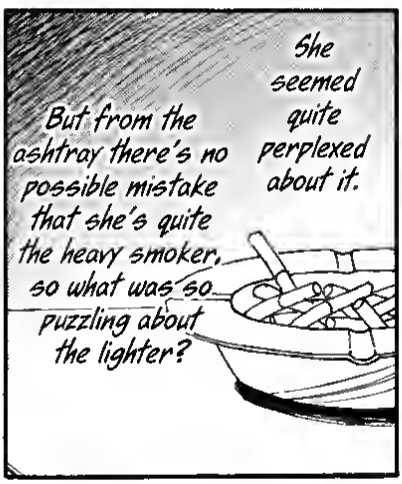

that wasn't there when I arrived!
There was wet grass an them
!!


Then how do you explain what happened with Yukari-san's shoes?
But when my father fell, my daughters were both inside the house!

Then, taking advantage of the confusian when everyane ran aut, they switched places...
The ather two sisters were an standby inside the hause sa that they would have an alibi.
The murder must've been committed by a third daughter that wasn't there at the time.

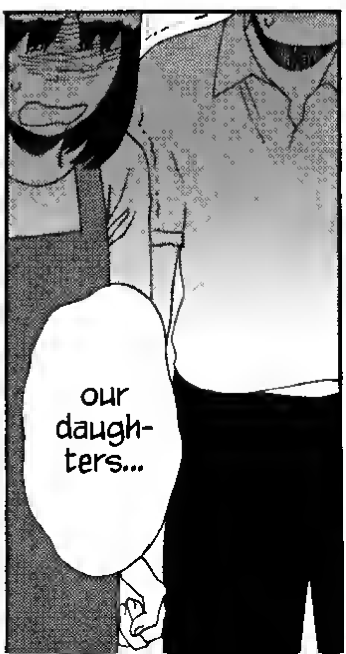

but if you consider that there were three girls, then it becomes simple to explain.
1) Kill.
2) Hide.
3) Join up and switch when everyone comes in.
knock knock


Then, the second incident!
I thought it was a locked room murder.

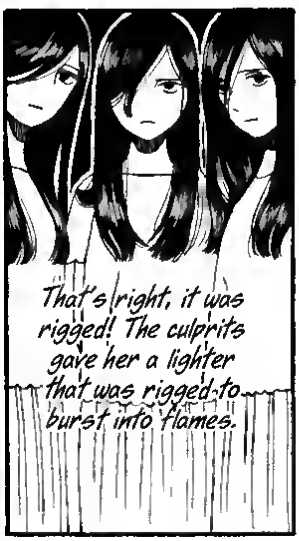

She seemed quite perplexed about it.
But from the ashtray there's no possible mistake that she's quite the heavy smoker, so what was so puzzling about the lighter?

The lighter that she received from Yurika-san or Arisa-san or whoever...

The third incident...


our daughters...

That's how they switched
under the guise of
...There's no way...

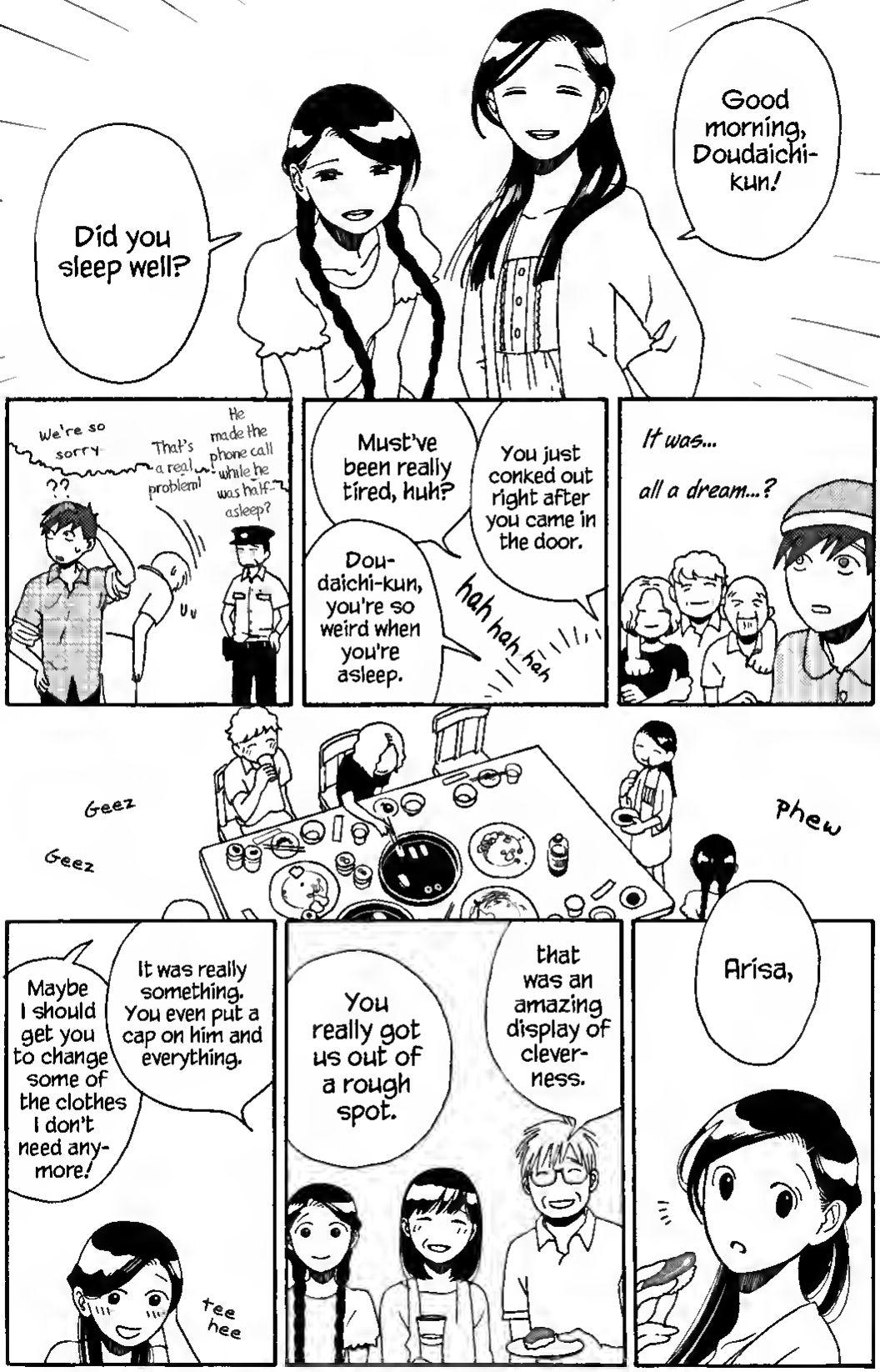

That's right, it was rigged! The culprits gave her a lighter that was rigged to burst into flames.

COULD POSSIBLY BE MURDERERS!
THUD
SIDE
Mom, Dad!
What did you do that for!?
Ah!
I can't believe you used your powers like that in front of people!
S-
Sorry...
What's going on?
What's going on?

WEEEEOOO
WEEEEOOO
Hello?
This is bad!
He must've called the police when we weren't looking!
Should I burn him?
Mom... Dad...
When he came to the conclusion that you were the culprits... We did it without thinking.
...Is this the end?
Grampa!
Urgh...
What are we gonna do?
Word will get out about our powers!
Even if we avoid the whole murder thing, someone still got injured!
What are we gonna do?

I don't want that to happen!
No!

Arisa!?
W-What are you doing!?
Whoosh
Shwoo
AHH...!!
Huh!?
What happened to me?
I felt like some sort of magic happened to me just now...
Huh!?
Where am I?
Jump up


Good morning, Doudaichi-kun!
Did you sleep well?
We're so sorry
??
That's a real problem!
He made the phone call while he was half-asleep?
Uu
Must've been really tired, huh?
You just conked out right after you came in the door.
Doudaichi-kun, you're so weird when you're asleep.
hah hah hah
It was...
all a dream...?
Geez
Geez
Phew
Maybe I should get you to change some of the clothes I don't need anymore!
It was really something. You even put a cap on him and everything.
tee hee
You really got us out of a rough spot.
that was an amazing display of cleverness.
Arisa,

No matter how small or large our powers may be,
it seems like this time we were too over-confident in our abilities,
and made things worse while trying to fix them.
I hope that we can all recognize the intelligence of using our powers when they should be used like Arisa did.
So he's not denying that there's a difference in sizes of our powers...
Hm?
Large
Small
Okay, you two,
Come here!
I'm going to cut the cake.
Arisa, I'll give you my strawberry.
Huh?
T-Thanks.
Maybe I should become a pajama designer.
You've got an ability that you can make a job out of...
You're so lucky, Arisa.
Oh well,
what-ever.

The Seventh Story ◉ The End

初出

竜の小塔――Fellows! 2011-AUGUST volume 18
人魚禁漁区――2011年5月 個人誌にて発行
わたしのかみさま――Fellows!(Q) 2011-AUTUMN "Quiet"
狼は嘘をつかない――Fellows! 2012-JUNE volume 23
金なし白祿――2011年10月 個人誌にて発行
子がかわいいと竜は鳴く――描き下ろし
犬谷家の人々――Fellows!(Q) 2012-AUTUMN "Q.E.D."

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